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IN OLDE CONNECTICUT

BEING A RECORD OF QUAIN, CURIOUS
AND ROMANTIC HAPPENINGS THERE
IN COLONIE TIMES AND LATER

BY

CHARLES BURR TODD

Author of "The True Aaron Burr," "The History of Redding
Connecticut"



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Editor's Introduction to the Series

The "return to the soil" of the well-to-do, which has been one of the most noteworthy tendencies of American life during the last decade, has been accompanied, naturally enough, by an increased interest in old ways and days, old houses, old china, old furniture and old fabrics. The inevitable result of this American renaissance has been a growing desire to know the humorous, pathetic and dramatic legends, traditions and historical incidents which are associated with them, in order to put them, so to speak, into their proper setting.

The episodes, legends and traditions which the more formal historians, for the most part, have considered beneath their notice are hidden away in letters, diaries, journals and scrapbooks: documents in files of old newspapers, the logbooks of vessels, the entries in family Bibles, the inscriptions in moss-grown cemeteries and the records of town meetings. They are to be found for the searching in the dark corners of garrets and the secret drawers of old secretaries. They are to be gleaned from the confidences of the local antiquarian, the recollections of the proverbial "old-

est inhabitant," the chatter of the good wives at the village sewing-circle, the "yarnings" of the worthies of the village grocery store, and from the speeches and the sallies of the "Old Home Week Reunion." To collect and combine into a coherent whole these varied historical data is the purpose of the series of which this book is the initial volume.

It will attempt an adequate presentation of the picturesque in American history. It will rehabilitate the life of our ancestors with a vividness rivalling that of the historical novel, and with a fidelity to fact of which the former is, in the very nature of the case, incapable. By so doing it will give body to our sentiment for the fact, provide an effective background for our Americanism and add a welcome perspective to our patriotism. It will aid us powerfully as a nation to assign a reason for the faith that is in us.

The main-travelled road is all well enough in its way for the person whose sole aim is to reach a given destination with the greatest possible expedition; but it is only by forsaking the main-travelled road, now and then, for the bypaths of the meadows, the pastures and the woods, that one may hope to become intimately acquainted

with all the resources and beauties of the region through which it leads. The byways of history are vastly more charming than its highways and every whit as significant in the last analysis.

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”

HENRY REED STILES, A.M., M.D.

HILL-VIEW, NEW YORK.

FOREWORD

TO the sons and daughters of Connecticut who love her history and traditions this little book is dedicated. Many of the unconsidered trifles, curious episodes, bits of quaint and curious lore here brought together were dug out of mines never before explored by the literary craftsman. They were first printed in various respectable journals such as Lippincott's Magazine, The Youth's Companion, The Magazine of American History, The New York Evening Post, etc., but are now for the first time collected and issued in book form.

C. B. T.

REDDING, CONN., February 6, 1906.

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IN OLDE CONNECTICUT

IN OLDE CONNECTICUT

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORIC BURR MANSION AT FAIRFIELD

I HAVE dwelt for some weeks near the site of the old Burr mansion house in this beautiful Connecticut village, and in these few days have become all that the most zealous antiquary could require. I have passed whole days in delving amid the musty records of the town and parish religiously preserved in the vaults of the town hall. I have held frequent chats with ancient gentlemen whose recollections extend beyond the Revolution to the palmy days of this village, and I have enjoyed the friendship and confidence of the Oldest Inhabitant, whose reminiscences go back to the founding of the village itself, which occurred soon after the pious and utter extermination of the bloodthirsty Pequots in a neighboring swamp. Most freely have been placed before me

family papers and legends sacredly preserved, and the result is a mass of materials, legendary and historic, which the public, if it has the least flavor of antiquity in its composition, will be interested in knowing, and which I shall impart as freely, if not as gracefully, as it was delivered.

Every New England village with any pretensions at all to antiquity has its ancient mansion house about which local traditions cluster, and whose very walls are permeated with the subtle aroma of the past. Fairfield was no exception to this rule, and its Burr mansion house has as good a title to historic fame, perhaps, as any of the oldtime dwellings of Middlesex.

Tradition says that it was built about 1700 by Chief Justice Peter Burr, one of the earliest graduates of Harvard, Chief Justice of Connecticut, and who once lacked but a few votes of becoming its Governor. The house stood somewhat back from the village main street on a slight eminence beneath a canopy of elms, and, with its dormer windows, its projecting gables and ivy-covered wings, presented quite the appearance of a manorial structure, the effect of which was increased on entering its wide hall with its heavy oaken stairway, or in wandering

about its chambers with their lofty walls, tiled fireplaces and heavy oak panelings.

At the time of the Revolution, the period to which our recollections are limited, this mansion was owned by Thaddeus Burr, Esq., a grandson of Judge Peter Burr, a gentleman of culture and ample estate, and who like many of the colonial gentry exercised an ample hospitality.

The ancient chronicles record with pride that General Washington in his journeyings from New York to Boston was his frequent guest. Franklin, Lafayette, Otis, Samuel Adams, Quincy, Watson, Governor Tryon, Dr. Dwight, the poet Barlow, are on the house's bead-roll of famous guests. There Trumbull and Copley dreamed and painted, the latter doing full length portraits of his host and hostess which are still preserved in the family. Governor Hancock was married there, his foster mother, Madam Hancock, died there. Colonel Aaron Burr passed many of his youthful days there as the guest of his cousin (not uncle as Parton has it), Thaddeus Burr.

This fact is recorded by the old chroniclers with special pride, nor was it difficult to discover the reason. Burr's family was of the bluest blood of New England and had been seated in Fairfield

for generations. His father, the Rev. Aaron Burr, the famous divine and real founder of Princeton College, was a native of Fairfield, Judge Peter Burr, before mentioned, was his granduncle. Colonel Andrew Burr, who led the Connecticut regiment in the brilliant attack on Louisbourg in 1745, was a cousin, and his family for generations had filled the various offices of state from deacon in the Puritan churches to magistrates, deputies and judges of the courts. Nor can one of those imbued in the ancient traditions of the village be made to admit that Burr was any other than a bitterly persecuted man, who, as has been said, suffered the fate of those who come into the world a hundred years before their time, and who was crushed by bigots, by the Federalists whom his defection to democracy had incensed, and by the powerful Virginia clique which his election to the Presidency had raised up against him.

To this mansion of historic fame, in May, 1775, came Miss Dorothy Quincy, daughter of Edmund Quincy of Boston, who had moved for three years as the belle of the polite circles of that town, and who was now the affianced bride of Governor John Hancock. A few weeks before she had

witnessed the battle of Lexington from the chamber window of the house where she was visiting, spiritedly refusing Governor Hancock's command to return to Boston and, after the battle, had fled with Hancock and Samuel Adams to the protection of her father's old friend in Fairfield, Thaddeus Burr. She was accompanied, we learn, by a chaperone in the person of Madam Hancock, widow of Thomas Hancock, the great Boston merchant, and uncle and foster father of John Hancock. The beauty, wit, grace and dignity of this lady the gossips never weary of descanting on, and it is plainly to be seen that they regard her residence in their village as an event which added measurably to its historic fame.

Some two or three days after Miss Dolly's advent, a young cavalier rode into the village from the West and alighted at the old mansion house. He was dressed in the height of fashion. His sword clanked in its scabbard at his side, and the village critics observed that he rode with the style and bearing of a prince; this cavalier was Aaron Burr, then a youth of twenty years, in the first flush and beauty of manhood, who had come on a visit to his favorite kinsman Thaddeus Burr. When the young people were presented in the

parlors of the mansion house that evening, it is said their surprise and pleasure were mutual, and it is more than hinted by the gossips that consequences destructive of Governor Hancock's peace of mind might have ensued had not the sage counsels of the elders prevailed over youthful passion and folly. It is at least true that Miss Dolly wrote a letter to a bosom friend not long after in which she spoke of Burr as a handsome young man with a pretty fortune, and complained of the extreme caution of her aunt who would not allow them to pass a moment alone in each other's society. It has been said of Aaron Burr, with hundreds of other unkind things, that he never refused a flirtation, yet his conduct on this occasion was honorable in the extreme. Whether it was, as cousin Thaddeus is said to have hinted, that he could not afford to have so powerful a man as Governor Hancock for his enemy, or whether, as is more probable, thoughts of war filled his mind to the exclusion of those of love, certain it is that on this occasion he fled from temptation and, making a hasty departure from the mansion house, he set off for Litchfield where he entered upon his legal studies with his brother-in-law Judge Tappan Reeve. Nor did he re-

visit the mansion house that summer except briefly in July when with his friend Ogden he passed through the town on his way to the continental camp before Boston. Miss Dorothy, however, passed the stirring days of that eventful summer in the ancient village whiling away the time as best she might. She rode, she sang, she boated; she accompanied the young people to their "feasts of shells," on the neighboring beaches; she conducted harmless flirtations with the village youths, her aunt having relaxed her vigilance after Burr's departure; she wrote letters to her Boston intimates, some of which still remain, and every fortnight the lumbering mail coach brought her a packet from Philadelphia, addressed in the sturdy, upright and downright characters of John Hancock; for that worthy, after a brief stay in the village, had gone on with Adams and others to hold the first continental Congress in Philadelphia. One of these letters was shown me, having been preserved as a most precious relic. It is addressed to "My Dear Dolly" and is superscribed "For Miss Dorothy Quincy at the house of Thaddeus Burr in Fairfield." It was a cold, formal, unloverlike epistle, and from the nature of girls was no doubt very

unsatisfactory to the fair one for whom it was intended.

In this way the summer days passed, and when the autumn purple and gold began to gather on the Fairfield elms a grand wedding was celebrated in the old mansion house—no less an affair than the marriage of Governor John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress, to Miss Dorothy Quincy, daughter of Edmund Quincy of Boston. One can but admire the thoroughness of detail, the nicety of finish, the old-fashioned enthusiasm, with which the village chroniclers describe the event. We see Governor Hancock, attended by a retinue of distinguished men—gentlemen, delegates, and others returning to their homes—ride up from the West, followed shortly after by a more glittering train from the East with prancing steeds and costly equipage and attended by gay cavaliers on horseback—the friends of the bride. There is Edmund Quincy, and there are Edmund Quincy's friends of Boston, grave, sober men and matrons of high degree, with gallant young cavaliers attending on stately maidens—near and dear friends of Miss Dolly, and all of the bluest blood of that ancient town. To swell this train of beauty and worth Hartford and New

Haven, even then the seats of a cultured and refined society, had contributed their quota; and it is even said that later in the day the Governor and his staff added the grace of their presence to the festive scene.

At nightfall, when the mansion was brilliantly illuminated, the mild radiance of the lamps beamed on a courtly throng, and on costumes that would have made their wearers presentable at the court of King George himself. Indeed, at this period of their narrative the chroniclers grow a little wearisome detailing so minutely as they do the elaborate toilets of the ladies, the coiffures sprinkled with diamond dust, the long-waisted gowns, the shimmer of silks and satins, the ribbons, laces and ruffles, the priceless gems that gleamed on shapely wrists and snowy shoulders.

Nor were the gentlemen forgotten, for just as minutely were described the glossy queues, the plum-colored coats and velvet small-clothes, the white silk stockings, the elaborate ruffles at wrist and throat, which formed the costumes of the male portion of that august assemblage.

In the midst of this grand array, before Parson Andrew Eliot of the Fairfield church, the stern-browed Governor and the blushing Dorothy

plighted their mutual vows after the simple ritual of the Puritan faith.

With the blessing of Parson Eliot the old chronicler closes his account of the wedding, but it is said that the merrymaking was only kept up until the morning, and that the next day the whole bridal train set out for Boston, leaving the old mansion to its wonted composure and quiet. This was the last merrymaking ever held within its walls.

During the four years of war which followed it was the scene of many secret conclaves of the patriot leaders, and in the British descent on Fairfield in 1779 the house was burned in the general conflagration of the village—a very particular account of which, by the way, is given in the “Travels” of the venerable Dr. Dwight.

CHAPTER II

THE BURNING OF FAIRFIELD BY THE BRITISH

IN 1879 Fairfield celebrated in a fitting manner the centennial anniversary of the burning of the settlement by the British on the seventh and eighth of July, 1779. To Governor Tryon belongs the inception and success of that enterprise, and on him the stigma of the disgraceful deed will ever rest. Tryon, it may not be generally known, had a special grudge against Connecticut, the sturdy little colony having opposed and thwarted him in a variety of ways. Her dragoons had scattered the types of his newspaper organ through the streets of New York; her "Sons of Liberty" had plotted against him even in his own city, and she had treated with contempt his proclamations inviting her to return to her allegiance, even printing them in her gazettes as specimens of the Governor's pleasant humor. When an expedition was fitted out to humble her it was natural that a man like the Governor should be

selected as the director of its movements. Reasons also existed for making Fairfield a special object of attack. The village had always wielded great political influence, which it had steadily exerted in favor of rebellion; one of her sons, General Silliman, was then in command of one of Washington's brigades; another, Colonel Abraham Gould, had fallen two years before in the skirmish at Ridgefield, a rebel in arms; Mr. Thaddeus Burr, a resident enjoying great prominence in the colony, was then publishing addresses inciting the people to resistance, and there were a score of families in the town who were among the most bitter and influential foes of the British Crown.

One who depends upon the historians for his knowledge of the attack will find it dismissed with only a meager notice, but from a private letter written by the Rev. Andrew Eliot of the church at Fairfield, who was an eyewitness of the scene, a very clear and circumstantial account of the outrage may be gleaned. Mr. Eliot was a son of the celebrated Rev. Andrew Eliot, so long pastor of the Old North Church of Boston; he was an able divine and good man; it would be hard to find a more interesting bit of history than his simple, yet vivid narrative of the burning of

Fairfield. The letter containing it is addressed to his brother, the Rev. John Eliot, in Boston, and is dated at Fairfield seven days after the events narrated occurred. It is given below almost entire:—

“It was in the beginning of wheat harvest, a season of exceeding labor and festivity; a season which promised the greatest plenty that has been known for many years within the memory of man. Never did our fields bear so numerous a load, never were our prospects with regard to sustenance so bright.

“The British fleet and army with the American refugees that had possessed and plundered New Haven set sail from that distressed place on the sixth about four o’clock. Next morning the approach of the fleet was announced by the firing of a small gun we have on Grover’s Hill, contiguous to the Sound. They seemed, however, to be passing by and at about seven o’clock we with pleasure beheld them all to the westward of us steering, as we thought, for New York. A very thick fog came over, which entirely deprived us of a sight of them until between the hours of nine and ten o’clock when the mist clearing away we beheld the whole fleet under our western shore,

and some of them close in under Kensie's Point. They presently came to anchor and lay until four in the afternoon when they began to land their troops a little to the eastward of Kensie's Point at a place called the Pines. From thence the troops marched along the beach until they came to a lane opposite the center of the town, through which they proceeded, and in about one hour paraded in three divisions on the green, between the meetinghouse and courthouse. From there they detached guards and, dividing into small parties, proceeded to their infernal business. Their commanding officers were Sir George Collier by sea and Generals Tryon and Garth by land.

"The approach of the fleet was so sudden that but few men could be collected, though alarm guns were fired immediately on the dissipation of the fog.

"There was no thought of opposing their landing as our forces were nothing to theirs; our little party, however, posted themselves so as to annoy them to the best advantage. The town was almost cleared of inhabitants; a few women, some of whom were of the most respectable families and characters, tarried with a view of saving their

property. They imagined that their sex and character would avail to such a purpose; they put some confidence in the generosity of an enemy who were once famed for generosity and politeness, and thought that kind treatment and submissive behavior would secure them against harsh treatment and rough usage. Alas! they were miserably mistaken, and bitterly repented their confidence and presumption.

“The Hessians were first let loose for rapine and plunder; they entered houses, attacking the persons of Whigs and Tories indiscriminately; breaking open desks, trunks and closets, and taking away everything of value. They robbed the women of their buckles, rings, bonnets, aprons and handkerchiefs; they abused them with the foulest and most profane language, and threatened their lives without the least regard to their earnest cries and entreaties; looking-glasses, china, and all kinds of furniture were soon dashed to pieces. Another party that came on were the American refugees, who, in revenge for their confiscated estates, carried on the same direful business. They were not, however, so abusive to the women as the former party, but appeared very furious against the town and country. The

Britons by what I could learn were least inveterate; some of the officers seemed to pity the misfortunes of the country, but in excuse said they had no other way to regain their authority over us. Individuals among the British troops were, however, exceedingly abusive, especially to women. Some were forced to submit to the most indelicate and rough treatment in defence of their virtue, and now bear the bruises of horrid conflict.

“About an hour before sunset the conflagration began at the house of Mr. Isaac Jennings, which was consumed with the neighboring buildings. In the evening the house of Elijah Abell, Esq., Sheriff of the county, was consumed with a few others, and in the night several buildings on the main street. General Tryon was in various parts of the town plot, with the good women begging and entreating him to save their houses. Mr. Sayre, the Church of England missionary, joined with them in these entreaties. He begged the General to spare the town, but was denied. He then begged that some few houses might be spared as a shelter for those who could procure habitations nowhere else; this was denied also. At length Mr. Tryon consented to save the houses

of Mr. Burr and of the writer of this epistle; both had been plundered long ere this. He said likewise that the houses for public worship should be spared. He was far from being in good temper while in the town. General Garth, at the other end of the town, treated the inhabitants with as much humanity as his errand would admit. . . . All the town from the bridge by Colonel Gould's to the Mill River, a few houses excepted, was a heap of ruins.

"About eight o'clock next morning the enemy sounded a retreat. We had some satisfaction amidst our sorrow and distress to see that the meetinghouse and a few other buildings remained, but the rear guard composed of banditti, the vilest ever let loose among men, set fire to everything that General Tryon had left, the large and elegant meetinghouse, the minister's house, Mr. Burr's and several other houses that had received protection. They tore the protection to pieces, damned Tryon, abused the women most shamefully, and then ran off in a most disgraceful manner. Happily our people came in and extinguished the flames in several houses, so that we are not entirely destitute. The rear guard which behaved in so scandalous a manner

were chiefly German troops called Yagers. They carry a small rifle, and fight in a skulking manner, like our Indians.

“Our fort yet stands; the enemy sent a row galley to silence it, and there was constant firing between them all night; one or two attempts to take it were made by parties of troops, but it was most bravely and obstinately defended by Lieutenant Isaac Jarvis of this town, who had but twenty-three men beside himself. Many were killed on both sides; the number cannot be ascertained. They carried off some prisoners, but no persons of distinction. Our friend Joseph Bartram was shot through the breast. Old Mr. Solomon Sturgis, an Irish servant of Mr. Penfield’s, and a negro man belonging to Mr. Lewis were put to death by the bayonet.

“The distress of this poor people is inexpressible; a most pleasant and delightful town in flames; what a scene did the eighth of July present! But I must forbear. Everything I have written you may depend upon as a fact. My pen has not been guided by prejudice, whether my feelings are, and should you publish this letter every reader may be assured that there is not the

least deviation from what actually took place upon this melancholy occasion. Yours, etc.,

“ANDREW ELIOT.”

A picturesque though somewhat grandiloquent account of the burning is given in those delightful chronicles the “Travels of Dr. Dwight,” a few paragraphs of which will prove an interesting supplement to Mr. Eliot’s narrative. After describing the attack, the capture of the town and the burning of the Burr mansion, which he says was done by order of Governor Tryon, he proceeds thus:

“While the town was in flames a thunderstorm overspread the heavens, just as night came on. The conflagration of nearly two hundred houses illuminated the earth, the skirts of the clouds, and the waves of the Sound with a union of gloom and grandeur at once inexpressibly awful and magnificent. The sky speedily was hung with the deepest darkness wherever the clouds were not tinged by the melancholy luster of the flames. At intervals the light played with a livid and terrible splendor; the thunder rolled above; beneath, the roaring of the flames filled up the intervals with a deep and hollow sound,

which seemed to be the protracted murmur of the thunder reverberated from one end of heaven to the other; add to this the convulsion of the elements, and these dreadful effects of vindictive and wanton devastation, the trembling of the earth, the sharp sound of muskets occasionally discharged, the groans, here and there, of the wounded and the dying, and the shouts of triumph; then place before your eyes crowds of miserable sufferers, mingled with bodies of militia from the neighboring hills, taking a farewell prospect of their property and dwellings, their happiness and their hopes, and you will find a just but imperfect picture of the burning of Fairfield. It needed no great effort of the imagination to believe that the final day had arrived, and that amid the funereal darkness the morning would speedily dawn to which no night would ever succeed, the graves yield up their inhabitants, and the trial commence at which was finally to be settled the destiny of man."

CHAPTER III

WHALEBOAT PRIVATEERSMEN OF THE REVOLUTION*

THERE was one phase of our revolutionary struggle peculiar in itself, and as interesting as a romance because of the skill, heroism and enterprise it developed, which historians have failed to limn in striking and positive colors,

* As showing the solicitude of the patriot leaders for this arm of the service, note the following letter from General Putnam written at his camp in Redding to Lieut. Col. Gray in command of the whaleboats:

“ Head Qtrs Reading

“ 25th Jany 1779

“ SIR

“ Some time ago Genl Parsons directed you at my request to have the whaleboats repaired and put in the best situation for use. I now desire that you will make me a Return of the number of Boats fit for service under your care and as soon as conveniently may be.

“ Inclosed is a letter for Gen. Silliman which you will forward by Express

“ I am Sir

“ Your Most Obdt Servant

“ ISRAEL PUTNAM

“ Lieut. Col. Gray ”

partly, perhaps, because the necessary data were difficult to obtain, and partly because the subject was not deemed of sufficient importance to justify so great an expenditure of labor. I refer to the whaleboat warfare waged chiefly between the Tories of Long Island and the Whigs of the seaboard towns of Connecticut, and carried on across the waters of the narrow Sound that separated the hostile parties. This warfare began with the outbreak of hostilities in 1775, continued to the peace of 1783, and affected the entire coasts of both communities, from Stamford to New London on the Connecticut shore, and from Throgg's Neck to Sag Harbor on the Long Island coast. The Cowboys and Skinners of the lower Hudson were organized gangs of plunderers who harried friend and foe impartially. The warfare between Staten Island and the New Jersey shore was largely a neighborhood skirmish, the partisan warfare at the South a conflict of clans; but the whaleboat service of the Sound combined the characteristics of all three, and to these added several peculiar features of its own, such as spying on the enemy, trading in goods declared contraband by the British, and abducting prominent gentlemen to be held as hostages or for exchange. As for the origin of

this peculiar service, it is found in the political condition of the two communities at the outbreak of hostilities, and in the organizations known as whaling companies, which could be employed only in a predatory, intermittent warfare. Connecticut was intensely Puritan and Republican; Long Island, settled by the conservative Dutch and by English gentlemen whose sympathies were entirely with the mother country, was as intensely monarchical and loyal. The guns of Lexington made these two communities bitter enemies.

The whaling companies of which mention has been made had existed all along shore, on both sides of the Sound, from the earliest times, and were very perfect organizations in their way. They were originally formed for the capture of whales, at one time as plentiful in the Sound as later in Delagoa Bay or on the Brazil Banks. Even the Indians were engaged in their pursuit, and a law was passed as early as 1708 for their protection from any molestation or detention while thus employed. A company comprised from twelve to thirty men, each owning its boats and whaling gear, and prosecuting its enterprise independently of the others. The business long neglected was renewed by Robert Murray and the

brothers Franklin, who fitted out a sloop in 1768. In 1772 the vessels were exempted from tonnage dues, and in 1774 the United Whaling Company was formed with Philip Livingston for its president. It seems to have been closed in July, 1776, by such of the members as remained in the city of New York. The business had nearly died out at the beginning of the Revolution, yet the company organizations were still retained, and the outbreak of hostilities found little squads of men all along the shore thoroughly equipped and drilled for partisan service. No general combination seems to have been effected; the Tories usually acting under commissions from the British authorities, and the Whigs as a part of the militia of their State. The objects of the different expeditions, as before hinted, were various; sometimes they took the form of reprisals on the enemy, sometimes they carried spies, who penetrated the hostile ranks, and returned with valuable information. Again, they captured prominent persons, who were held as hostages or as prisoners of war. Sometimes they were expeditions against the enemy's war vessels, garrisoned posts or military supplies, and not infrequently, it is to be feared, they degenerated into mere plundering excursions.

Having thus glanced at the preëxisting conditions of the warfare, it will be interesting to consider in detail some of the more noteworthy exploits of these hardy privateersmen. First, and perhaps the most remarkable of these, was the expedition of the lamented Captain Nathan Hale, whose tragic story, often told, seems to gain fresh interest with each recital. Washington, it will be remembered, after his retreat from Long Island, desired a thoroughly competent person to visit the enemy's camp and report his numbers and plans in full. Captain Hale, young, talented, but two years out of college, the idol of the army, volunteered his services. "I have been nearly a year in the service without doing anything of moment for my country, and now that an opportunity offers I dare not refuse," he said in answer to the remonstrances of his friends. Washington accepted the sacrifice, and the chivalrous young patriot at once began preparations for the enterprise. To cross over directly from New York to Brooklyn into the enemy's camp would court discovery, but to pass eastward into some of the Connecticut towns, thence across the Sound by means of the whaleboat service, and so approach the hostile camp from among its friends, offered a fair pros-

pect of success; and this plan Captain Hale adopted. He chose Fairfield, Conn., as his point of departure. This town was then one of the first importance, and exerted as much influence in State affairs as either New Haven or Hartford. It was the center of the republican cause in Western Connecticut, and, as will be seen, the nucleus of the whaleboat service, expeditions radiating from it in all directions except landward, like spokes from a hub. The ancient town was already in arms, its two militia companies were fully armed and equipped, a patrol of twenty seamen guarded the coast nightly from sunset to sunrise against Tory incursions, and two whaleboat crews had already been out spying the enemy's movements and harrassing him whenever an opportunity offered. Captain Hale arrived in the town on the 14th of September, 1776, bearing a letter from General Washington, instructing any of the American armed vessels to speed his passage across the Sound. Presenting this letter to the town Committee of Safety, a whaleboat and its crew were at once put in requisition, and that same night he was safely and secretly conveyed to the island, and reached Huntington early next morning, from which place he succeeded in pen-

etrating the British lines. His subsequent movements and sad fate are too well known to need recapitulation here. After this episode no further action of importance is found in the annals of the service until the August of 1777. In the beginning of that year a company of Tories, under Colonel Richard Hewlett, took possession of the old Presbyterian Church in Brookhaven on Long Island, nearly opposite Fairfield, and proceeded to fortify it, surrounding it with a stockade and other defensive works. Early in August Colonel Abraham Parsons, who later rose to the command of a brigade in General Putnam's division, began collecting a force in Fairfield for the reduction of this novel fortress. Having mustered one hundred and fifty men, provided with muskets and one brass six-pounder, he embarked from Black Rock Harbor in Fairfield in a sloop and six whaleboats for the purpose of capturing the Tory stronghold. It was the evening of the 14th of August, 1777, and before daybreak next morning they had landed at Crane Neck Bend, near the village. Here leaving their boats they marched quickly to the church, dragging the six-pounder through the sands. Arrived at a proper distance, the detachment halted, and a flag of truce was sent to

Colonel Hewlett, demanding an unconditional surrender. This being refused, fire was opened at once, and returned in a spirited manner by the besieged. Before anything could be accomplished, however, word was brought that a British fleet was sailing down the Sound, and fearing that his retreat might be cut off, Colonel Parsons ordered his detachment to the boats. They re-embarked in good order and reached Black Rock the same evening, bringing with them no trophies except a few of the enemy's horses and some military stores. For the next year and a half the whaleboat service was chiefly employed in spying on the enemy, cutting off his unarmed vessels, making plundering incursions into his lines, and harrassing him in much the same manner that the gad-fly torments the ox. Indeed, such was their enterprise, that no royalist on Long Island considered himself safe without an armed guard, and most of the British officers on the island repaired to New York and Brooklyn for protection.

In the spring of 1779 Sir Henry Clinton determined to pay off the Connecticut privateersmen in their own coin. General Gold Selleck Silliman, a descendant of an old Connecticut family, was then living at Holland Hill, a fine old country seat

in the town of Fairfield, about two miles out of the village. He was one of the most prominent Whigs in his section. After the battle of Long Island, and before the army moved from New York, General Washington had given him the command of a brigade. Later Governor Trumbull had made him his deputy in consultations with the Commander-in-Chief, and there is still extant a long letter from Washington to him, on matters connected with the army, written while he was acting in this capacity. He had been trained to the law, and as a delegate to the Continental Congress had done good service for the people. At the time of which I write he was a member of the town's Committee of Inspection and Correspondence, and had been appointed by the Governor and Council commander of all the State forces in the vicinity of Fairfield, his house at Holland Hill being retained as his headquarters. General Clinton now determined on his capture. He selected a man named Glover, a Tory refugee, formerly of Newtown, who had once worked for the General and knew him well, with eight other refugees, for this purpose. The party left Lloyd-Neck, L. I., in a whaleboat on the evening of the first of May, and reached Fairfield about mid-

night, when, leaving one man to guard the boat, the others surrounded the Silliman mansion and began rapping for admission. The journal of Mrs. Silliman contains so graphic an account of the attack and abduction that it is given in her own words:

“At a midnight hour, when we were all asleep, the house was attacked. I was first awakened by the General’s calling out, ‘Who’s there?’ At that instant there was a banging at both doors, they intending to break them down or burst them open—and this was done with great stones as big almost as they could lift, which they left at the door. My dear companion then sprang up, caught his gun and ran to the front of the house and, as the moon shone brightly, saw them through the window and attempted to fire, but his gun only flashed and missed fire. At that instant the enemy burst in a window, sash and all, jumped in, seized him and said he was their prisoner, and must go with them. He asked if he might dress himself. They said yes, if he would be quick. They followed him into the bedroom, where I and my dear little boy lay, with their guns and bayonets fixed; their appearance was dreadful; it was then their prisoner addressed them in mild terms

and begged them to leave the room, and told them their being there would frighten his wife. They then withdrew for a moment or two, and then returned, when he asked them out again and shut the door. After that I heard them breaking the windows, which they wantonly did with the breeches of their guns. They then asked him for his money; he told them he had none but continental, and that would do them no good. Then they wished his papers. He said his public papers were all sent abroad, and his private papers would be of no use to them. Then some wanted one thing and some another. He told them mildly he hoped he was in the hands of gentlemen, and that it was not their purpose to plunder. With these arguments he quieted them so that they plundered but little. They then told him he must go. He asked if he might take leave of his wife. They said yes if he would make haste—he then came in and dropped a bundle of his most valuable private papers under something on the table, took leave of me with great seeming fortitude and composure, and went away with them. As soon as I heard the door shut I arose and went to the bedroom of our son William, and found he was gone, although I did not hear any of them taking him. I

then went to the door and saw them bearing away their prisoners. I then went to inform those at the next house, when they fired a gun, which frightened the enemy very much, as they had not got above a quarter of a mile from our house. They took them down about two miles to their whaleboat, where they had left one man, and proceeded on their journey to Long Island. I heard nothing more from them in three weeks. After three weeks I received a letter from the General informing me where he was. I think they were then at Flatbush on Long Island. In that he told me where to send my letters to him for inspection, as no letters were suffered to pass without. . . . Nine men came over in the boat. They embarked between the hours of one and two o'clock Sabbath morning, and had a boisterous time over. They took a fusee, a pair of elegant pistols inlaid with silver, and an elegant sword which one of them who had worked at our house took much pleasure in flourishing about, and he it was who piloted them. On arriving at (Lloyd-Neck) Long Island they were hailed by Colonel Simcoe, who commanded there: 'Have you got him?' 'Yes.' 'Have you lost any men?' 'No.' 'That's well,' said Simcoe. 'Your Sillimans and your Washing-

tons are not worth a man.' He then ordered his men to the guard house with the prisoner. Said the General 'Am I going to the guard house?' 'Yes!' When they came there, he said to the Adjutant, 'Is it thus you treat prisoners of my rank?' He said, 'We do not look on you as we should on a continental General.' 'But how will you view me when an exchange is talked of?' 'I understand you, Sir,' and walked out, as I suppose, to report to his commanding officer. Soon after a horse and carriage was sent to bring them to New York, guarded by a corps of dragoons. On his arrival all flocked to see the rebel. They gave him good lodgings until he was ordered to Flatbush, where he remained until exchanged for Judge Jones."

This bold abduction excited the liveliest commotion, not only in the town, but throughout the State, and led to redoubled vigilance on the part of the coast guard, which had somewhat slackened in watchfulness as the days passed on and no enemy appeared. Negotiations were at once opened with the enemy for an exchange of their prisoner, but it was soon found that the Americans had no one in their possession whom the British would consider an equivalent for the General. In no-

wise disconcerted, however, the hardy privateersmen determined on capturing some person of equal rank, and began casting about for a prisoner. There was then living at Fort Neck, a village in the town of Oyster Bay, Long Island, the Hon. Thomas Jones, a Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of New York, a staunch royalist; this gentleman was selected as a proper subject for their enterprise. Through the golden autumn days a plan was slowly matured in the village. Captain David Hawley, one of the most skillful captains in the service, aided by Captains Lockwood and Jones, quietly enlisted twenty-five of the bravest men in their commands, and on the evening of the 4th of November, 1779, set off in whaleboats from Newfield (now Bridgeport) Harbor. A few hours brought them across the Sound, and into Stony Brook Creek near Smithtown, where they disembarked and at once set out for the Judge's residence, fifty-two miles distant. They arrived there about nine o'clock on the evening of the 6th. A merry party had assembled at the mansion, music and dancing were in progress, and the noise effectually prevented the approach of the party from being heard. Captain Hawley knocked at the door, but perceiving that no one

heard him, forced it, entered and found Judge Jones standing in the hall. Telling the Judge that he was his prisoner, he forced him to depart with him, together with a young man named Hewlett. According to the journal above quoted, the party met with several adventures on their return to the boats. At one place they had to pass a guard of soldiers posted near the road. Here the Judge hemmed very loud, whereupon Captain Hawley forbade him to repeat the sound. He, however, repeated it, but on being told that a repetition would be attended by fatal consequences he desisted, and the picket was passed in safety. When day broke the adventurers concealed themselves in a thick forest until nightfall, and then resumed their journey. They reached their boats on the third night, and crossed to Black Rock with their prisoners, having met with no mishaps except the loss of six men, who, having lagged behind on the third night, were captured by the light horse which closely pursued them. Mrs. Silliman, a most amiable and accomplished lady, hearing of the Judge's arrival, sent him an invitation to breakfast, which he accepted, and during his stay in Fairfield he was the guest of the mansion, its fair mistress doing all in her power to

make his situation agreeable; yet we are told that he remained distant, reserved and sullen. After several days he was removed to Middletown on the Connecticut, and negotiations were again opened for an exchange. It was six months, however, before the British would accept the terms proposed; but at length, in May, 1780, they agreed that if a certain notorious refugee, named Washburn, could be included in the exchange, they would release General Silliman for Judge Jones, and his son for Mr. Hewlett. A very pleasant incident of the transfer of the prisoners is recorded. The vessel bearing General Silliman met the one conveying Judge Jones in the middle of the Sound, whereupon the vessels were brought to, and the gentlemen dined amicably together, after which they proceeded to their respective homes.

A little more than a year elapsed, and then the village was stirred by the departure of another expedition, bound on a still more hazardous service. It consisted of eighty men, part of them dismounted dragoons from Colonel Sheldon's regiment, and was under the command of Major, afterwards Colonel, Benjamin Tallmadge, who will be remembered as attending Major André at the

scaffold, and afterwards as a representative in Congress from Connecticut for sixteen years. The object of the expedition was Fort St. George, erected on a point projecting into the Great South Bay, at Mastic, L. I. The party embarked at Fairfield, November 21, 1780, at 4 P. M., in eight whaleboats. "They crossed the Sound in four hours, and landed at Oldman's at nine o'clock. The troops had marched about five miles, when, it beginning to rain, they returned and took shelter under their boats, and lay concealed in the bushes all that night and the next day. At evening, the rain abating, the troops were again put in motion, and at three o'clock in the morning were within two miles of the fort. Here he divided his men into three parties, ordering each to attack the fort at the same time at different points. The order was so well executed that the three divisions arrived nearly at the same time. It was a triangular inclosure of several acres, thoroughly stockaded, well barricaded houses at two of the angles, and at the third a fort, with a deep ditch and wall, encircled by an abatis of sharpened pickets projecting at an angle of forty-five degrees. The stockade was cut down, the column led through the grand parade, and in ten minutes the main

fort was carried by the bayonet. The vessels near the fort, laden with stores, attempted to escape, but the guns of the fort being brought to bear upon them, they were secured and burnt, as were the works and stores. The number of prisoners was fifty-four, of whom seven were wounded. While they marched to the boats under an escort, Major Tallmadge proceeded with the remainder of the detachment, destroyed about three hundred tons of hay collected at Coram, and returned to the place of debarkation just as the party with the prisoners arrived, and reached Fairfield by eleven o'clock the same evening, having accomplished the enterprise, including a march of forty miles by land and as much by water, without the loss of a man."

For this exploit Major Tallmadge was honored with an autograph letter of thanks from General Washington, and with a complimentary resolution from Congress. It was not the first nor the last time that this gallant officer made use of the whaleboat service to annoy the enemy. Very early in the war he had opened a secret correspondence for Washington with the Whigs of Long Island, and kept one or more boats constantly employed in this service. In 1777 a band of Tory

marauders had established themselves, under the protection of a strongly fortified post erected by the British, on a promontory between Huntington and Oyster Bay, whence they would steal out in their boats and commit depredations on the Connecticut coast. Tallmadge, learning of the retreat of this horde of bandits, determined to break it up, and on the 5th of September, 1777, embarked with 130 men at Shippan's Point, near Stamford, at eight o'clock in the evening, landed at Lloyd's Neck, captured the entire party, and returned to Stamford before morning dawned; and again in October, 1781, he embarked his forces at Norwalk and captured and burned Fort Slongo at Tredwell's Bank, near Smithtown, bringing off a number of prisoners and a piece of artillery.

Captain Caleb Brewster of Fairfield was another Continental officer who figures largely in the records of the whaleboat service. In 1781 he captured an armed boat with her crew on the Sound, and brought both safely into Fairfield, and on the 7th of December, 1782, was the hero of one of the most famous and desperate encounters of the privateersmen, which is still spoken of in Fairfield as the "boat fight." On the morning of that day several of the enemy's armed boats

were seen proceeding down the Sound, and Captain Brewster, with his hardy veterans, at once put out from Fairfield to intercept them. Forcing his boats into the midst of the enemy's fleet, a hand to hand conflict ensued, so deadly that in twenty minutes nearly every man on both sides was either killed or wounded, the gallant captain himself being pierced by a rifle ball through the shoulder. Two of the enemy's boats were captured in this affair, the others succeeding in making their escape. This gallant act brought the captain the plaudits of his countrymen, and a pension for life from Congress. In a year his wound had so far recovered that he was ready for active service again, and took command of an expedition for capturing the *Fox*, a British armed vessel that had been stationed in the Sound to prevent the roaming of the privateersmen, and had long been a source of annoyance to them. On a dark night—the 9th of March, 1783—the boats left Fairfield, and stealing upon the *Fox* as she lay at anchor, captain and men leaped on board with fixed bayonets, and in two minutes the vessel was at their mercy. Captain Johnson of the *Fox* and two of his men were killed and several wounded, while of the patriots not a person was injured. After

the war Captain Brewster was commander of the revenue cutter of the district of New York for a number of years. He died at Black Rock, Fairfield, February 13, 1827, aged seventy-nine years.

But the operations of the whaleboatmen were not always of an offensive character; they were sometimes obliged to act on the defensive—but generally, even in such cases, with credit to themselves. Early in March, 1780, a band of seven men, commanded by one Alexander Graham, a deserter from the American army, but who then bore a commission from General Howe, authorizing him to recruit Connecticut Tories for the British army, landed on the coast at or near Branford, and marched inland to the house of Captain Ebenezer Dayton in Bethany, a merchant, who had been obliged to flee from Long Island to escape the persecutions of the Tories. In the absence of the Captain they broke into the house, and destroyed or carried off nearly five thousand pounds worth of property. From this place they proceeded to Middlebury where they were secreted in the cellar of a Tory family for several days, and afterward to Oxford, where they lay several days longer in a barn. At length, leaving their retreat here, they passed through Derby, and down

the Housatonic to Stratford, where they took a whaleboat and set out for Long Island. Their passage through Derby had been discovered, however, and two whaleboats with their crews, under command of Captains Clark and Harvey, started in pursuit, and after a brisk chase succeeded in overhauling the marauders just as they were entering the British lines. They were brought back in triumph, tried and condemned—Graham, the commander, to be hanged, and the others to the tender mercies of the old Newgate.

No unimportant place in the annals of the whaleboat service of the Revolution belongs to Captain Marriner of Harlem and Captain Hyler of New Brunswick. In an old time-stained copy of the "Naval Magazine," printed nearly sixty years ago, is to be found a very interesting and gossipy account of these famous chieftains, communicated by General Jeremiah Johnson, himself a revolutionary veteran and privy to the facts which he relates. I give the article nearly entire:

"Hyler and Marriner cruised between Egg Harbor and Staten Island. Hyler took several ships and levied contributions on the New York fishermen on the fishing banks. He frequently visited Long Island. He took a Hessian Major at night

from the house of Michael Bergen at Gowanus, when his soldiers were encamped near the house. He surprised and took a sergeant's guard at Canarsie from the house of their Captain, Schenck. The guards were at supper, and their muskets standing in the hall, when Hyler entered with his men. He seized the arms, and, after jesting with the guards, he *borrowed* the silver spoons for his family; took a few other articles, with all the muskets, and made one prisoner. He sent the guard to report themselves to Colonel Axtell, and returned to New Jersey. Captain Hyler also paid a visit to Colonel Lott at Flatlands. The Colonel was known to be rich; his money and his person were the objects desired. He was surprised in his house and taken. His cupboard was searched for money, and some silver found; and, on further search, two bags supposed to contain guineas were discovered. These, with the silver, the Colonel and two of his negroes, were taken to New Brunswick. In the morning, on the passage up the Raritan, the captain and crew agreed to count and divide the guineas. The bags were opened, when, to the mortification of the crew, they found the bags contained only halfpennies belonging to the church of Flatlands; and the Colonel also dis-

covered that his guineas were safe at home. The crew were disappointed in their Scotch prize. They, however, determined to make the most of the adventure; they took the Colonel and his negroes to New Brunswick, where they compelled him to ransom his negroes, and then permitted him to return home on parole. Captain Hyler also took a corvette of twenty guns about nine o'clock at night in Coney Island Bay. The ship lay at anchor, bound for Halifax, to complete her crew. The night was dark; one of the boats with muffled oars was rowed up close under the stern of the ship, where the officers were to be seen at a game of cards in the cabin, and no watch on deck. The spy-boat then fell astern to her consort and reported, when orders were passed to board. The boats were rowed up silently—the ship boarded instantly on both sides—and not a man was injured. The officers were confined in the cabin and the crew below. The Captain ordered the officers and crew to be taken out of the ship, well fettered and placed in the whaleboats. Afterwards a few articles were taken from the ship and she was set on fire, when Captain Hyler left her with his prisoners from New Brunswick.

“My informant, one of the men who took the

ship, stated that the captain of the corvette wept as they were crossing the Bay, and reproached himself for permitting one of his Majesty's ships to be surprised and taken by 'two d—d egg shells,' and he added that there were \$40,000 on board the burning vessel, which Captain Hyler and his crew deserved for their gallant enterprise. The booty however was lost.

"After the notorious refugee Lippincott had barbarously murdered Captain Huddy at Sandy Hook, General Washington was very anxious to have the murderer secured. He had been demanded from the British General and his surrender refused. Retaliation was decided on by General Washington. Young Asgill was to be the innocent victim to atone for the death of Captain Huddy. He was saved by the mediation of the Queen of France. Captain Hyler determined to take Lippincott. On inquiry he found that he resided in a well known house in Broad street, New York. Dressed and equipped like a man-of-war press-gang, he left the Kills with one boat after dark, and arrived at Whitehall about nine o'clock. Here he left his boat in charge of three men, and then passed to the residence of Lippincott, where he inquired for him, and found he was absent and

gone to a cockpit. Captain Hyler thus failed in the object of his pursuit and visit to the city. He returned to his boat with his press-gang, and left Whitehall; but finding a sloop lying at anchor off the Battery from the West Indies laden with rum, he took the vessel, cut her cable, set her sails, and with a northeast wind sailed to Elizabethtown Point, and before daylight had landed from her, and secured, forty hogsheads of rum. He then burned the sloop to prevent her recapture.

“ Captain Marriner resided many years at Harlem and on Ward’s Island after the war. He was a man of eccentric character, witty and ingenious, and abounding in anecdotes; but he had his faults. He had been taken by the British, was on parole in King’s County, and quartered with Rem Vanpelt of New Utrecht. The prisoners among the officers had the liberty of the four southern towns of the county. Many of them frequented Dr. Van Buren’s Tavern in Flatbush. Here our captain’s sarcastic wit in conversation with Major Sherbrook of the British army led to abusive language from the Major to the prisoner. After some time Marriner was exchanged, when he determined to capture Major Sherbrook. Colonel Matthews (Mayor of New York), Colonel Axtell and a Major

Bache, who all resided in Flatbush, were noted and abusive Tories, and obnoxious to the American officers. For the purpose of carrying his design into execution, he repaired to New Brunswick and procured a whaleboat. This he manned with a crew of well armed volunteers, with whom he proceeded to New Utrecht, and landed on the beach at Bath, about half-past nine o'clock in the evening. Leaving two men in charge of the boat, with the rest of the crew he marched unmolested to Flatbush church, where he divided his men into four squads, assigning a house to each; each party or squad was provided with a heavy post to break in the doors. All was silent in the village. Captain Marriner selected the house of George Martence, where his friend, the Major, quartered, for himself; the other parties proceeded to their assigned houses. Time was given to each to arrive at its destination; and it was agreed that when Marriner struck his door the others were to break in theirs, and repair to the church with their prisoners. The doors were broken at the same time. Marriner found the Major behind a large chimney in the garret where he had hidden himself; and where he surrendered in the presence of his landlady who lit the way for Marriner. The

Major was permitted to take his small-clothes in his hand, and thus was marched to the church where the parties assembled. Mr. Bache was taken. Cols. Axtell and Matthews being at New York escaped capture. The parties marched with their prisoners unmolested to their boat and returned safe to New Brunswick. This event took place about midsummer on a fair moonlight night.

“Captain Marriner also paid Simon Cortelyou of New Utrecht a visit; and took him to New Brunswick as a return for his uncivil conduct to the American prisoners. He took his tankard and several articles also which he neglected to return. After Captain Marriner’s visit to Flatbush, four inhabitants of New Utrecht were taken separately, and separately imprisoned in the Provost, in New York, on suspicion of having been connected with Marriner in his enterprise, viz., Colonel Van Brunt, his brother Adrian Van Brunt, Rem Vanpelt, and his brother Art Vanpelt.”

As the war progressed, the boldness and adventurous spirit of the privateersmen increased, until towards the close, the entrances to New York were in a state of blockade, which even armed vessels did not always attempt to force singly. The Narrows and the Sound swarmed with whaleboats. The

fishing industry on which the inhabitants of New York greatly depended for food, and which was a main source of supply to the beleaguered garrison, was almost wholly broken up. The fisheries had always been a matter of concern to the merchants, and annual bounties were paid to the vessels bringing in the largest quantities of deep-sea fish.

The Shrewsbury banks, a favorite fishing ground, and the main source of supply to the New York market, were jealously watched. In the safe cover of the Shrewsbury River, Hyler lay in wait to pounce upon the adventurous or unwary who cast a line or dragged a net within its assumed jurisdiction. Unlike the British Admiral on the station, he granted no passes for illicit trade, but took his toll in another fashion. On one occasion it is related of him that he captured two fishing vessels which he ransomed at one hundred dollars each, and within the week recaptured one of the same boats, which had again ventured within his reach. Such was the frequency of these captures that the Tory merchants who revived the Chamber of Commerce during the war, made application to Admiral Arbuthnot for "the protection of the fishermen employed on the banks of Shrewsbury." The Admiral purchased a vessel mounting twelve

carriage guns and requested that the city would man her, but the seamen placed little faith in the promises from British naval officers, and hesitated to enter a service, the exit of which was as hopeless as from the Inferno of Dante. The "hot press" was the terror of American sailors before and after the war; indeed, till Hull and Decatur and Preble laid an injunction upon it at the cannon's mouth.

In 1782 similar application was made to Admiral Graves, who had succeeded Arbuthnot on the station, and the intervention of General Robertson, the military commandant of the city, was invoked "to encourage the fishermen to take fish for a supply to this garrison, and that its commerce may not be annoyed by the privateersmen and whaleboats that infest the narrows." The newspapers of 1781 are full of Hyler's exploits, which sometimes reached higher game than fishing smacks. In June, he and an associate, Captain Story, in two whaleboats boarded and took the schooner Skip Jack (which mounted six carriage guns besides swivels), at high noon, and burned her in sight of the guard ship and the men of war on the station, and on the same cruise carried off three small trading vessels laden with contraband cattle on the way from the Jersey Tories to New York.

Captain Adam Hyler was of New Brunswick. He died in the fall of 1782 and was honorably mentioned in the "New Jersey Gazette," for "his many heroic and enterprising acts in annoying and distressing the enemy."

The whaleboats used on their excursions were formidable enemies. They were upwards of thirty-five feet long, were rowed with eight oars, carried two heavy sails and were armed with a large swivel. They depended on neither wind nor tide for their progress in pursuit or flight.

After the war Captain Marriner resumed his avocation of tavern keeper, in the course of which he occupied several houses in the village of Harlem, which were in turn a favorite resort of the politicians and military men of the city. He was also largely patronized by the disciples of Izaak Walton, who angled for bass or dropped their line for the tautog in the stirring waters of Hell Gate and its vicinity. Marriner also figures in history as the caterer who provided the dinner for General Washington and his suite, on their visit to the ruins of Fort Washington in 1790. The Commander-in-Chief refers to the affair in his journal, under date of July 10 of that year.

CHAPTER IV

SAYBROOK AND GUILFORD, 1880

OLD SAYBROOK is almost the only Connecticut town that boasts nobility for its founders, and a real lord and lady for its first governors. Almost two hundred and fifty years ago, we learn from the old chroniclers, Lord Say and Seal, Lord Brook, Colonel Fenwick, and "other gentlemen of distinction in England," procured a patent of the territory "lying west from Narragansett River, a hundred and twenty miles on the sea-coast, and from thence in latitude and breadth aforesaid to the South Sea." A quaint old document, it is said, was this patent, which, after defining in obsolete legal terms, the metes and bounds of the grant, its "privileges and appurtenances" of woods, uplands, arable lands, meadows, pastures, ponds, havens, ports, waters, rivers, adjoining islands, fishings, huntings, fowlings, mines, minerals, quarries and precious stones, closed as follows:

“According to the tenour of his majestie’s manor of East Greenwich, in the county of Kent in ye kingdom of England, in free and common soccage, and not in cappitu nor by Knight service; they yielding and paying therefor to our sovereign Lord the King, his heirs and successors, only the fifth part of all the Oar of Gold and Silver which from time to time, and at all times hereafter shall be gotten, had or otherwise obtained.”

The first step of the patentees was to plant a settlement in their new possessions, and early in 1635 they deputed John Winthrop, son of the famous Governor Winthrop, to build a fort on Saybrook Point, which should serve as a nucleus for the proposed settlement, and the site of which is still pointed out to the tourist, on a little eminence commanding the mouth of the Connecticut River. This fort is a central form in the history of the State. The waves of Pequot and Narragansett warfare rolled about it for almost half a century; several times it was beseiged, and a hundred moving tales of ambush and rally, of capture, torture and individual murder are related by the antiquarians of the village concerning it. Only a few days after the fort was begun a Dutch vessel from New Netherlands came hither with

the view to taking possession of the river, but was driven off by the guns of the fort. From its walls Captain Mason and his men on a May day in 1637 set out for the destruction of Pequot fort and nation at Groton, and here Governor Andros in 1675 made his first attempt against the chartered rights of the colony by sailing up from New York with an armed force and demanding the surrender of the fort.

In 1639 Colonel George Fenwick arrived and continued to act as Governor of the plantation until it was sold to the colony of Connecticut in 1644, the noble owners of the patent having relinquished their former plan of improving their grant in person. Colonel Fenwick was accompanied by his wife, Lady Anne Butler, daughter of an English nobleman, the first lady of rank who appears in the colonies, and whose story forms one of the most romantic and interesting episodes in the history of Saybrook. With true wifely devotion she refused to allow her husband to depart for the New World alone, and leaving behind the comforts and refinements of life in the English upper class she followed him hither, and shared with him the perils of Indian warfare and the privations of the wilderness. The brave lady's

love and devotion cost her dear; she died in 1648, nine years after her arrival, and was buried a few yards southwest of the fort, on a slight eminence known to this day as Tomb Hill. The bereaved husband erected a monument to mark her grave, and soon after sailed away to England, where he figured in history as one of the judges of the unfortunate King Charles the First. For more than two hundred years the brave lady's tomb remained amid the bleakness and barrenness of the Point. At length the line of the Connecticut Valley Railroad was laid out directly through it and, yielding to the exigencies of modern progress, the interesting relic was removed. In opening the grave a floss of her bright golden hair was found perfectly preserved; it is now owned by a conductor on the Valley Railroad whose antiquarian tastes led him to appropriate that which no one else valued. The tourist now looks in the village cemetery for the poor lady's cenotaph, a shapeless monument, rudely carved from the red sandstone of the valley, and from some unexplained cause bearing no inscription whatever, probably because the hard, stern, Puritan spirit forbade to a woman the glowing panegyric necessary in order to do justice to her virtues. This part of Saybrook is now called

Fenwick, I suppose in her honor, and the large summer hotel built here in 1871 received its name, Fenwick Hall, probably for the same reason.

But Saybrook once barely missed an honor greater than any which have been narrated. Over on the south end of the Point—a region of shifting sands and bunches of beach grass, that at the touch of the sea breeze vibrates with the tunes of a hundred Æolian harps, and which is now occupied only by the hotels and the great lighthouse—a city was once laid out, with streets and squares, a park, a public mart, and wharfs for the shipping; then the colonists began to whisper of the arrival of distinguished strangers, and to scan the distant sea line for an expected sail. The strangers thus looked for, the old chronicles go on to say, were Cromwell, Pym, Hasselrig and Hampden, the four most illustrious commoners in English annals, who at one time had made all preparations to emigrate to the New World, once actually embarking for the voyage, but were driven back by adverse winds, and from some unknown cause were led to abandon their project; and so the colonists were disappointed and the city lots left to return to their original barrenness.

It was at Saybrook that Yale College had its

birth, and the first fifteen Commencements of the institution were held here; and in this village, in the autumn of 1708, assembled the convention of Puritan ministers which adopted the famous Saybrook Platform. It may be readily imagined that the latter was one of the great events of the village.

The state of the church at that time was such as to awaken the gravest apprehensions. The liberal doctrines of Roger Williams—the most trenchant foe that Calvinism ever encountered—were advancing from the East. Antinomianism, the Anabaptist and Pedobaptist heresies were prevalent. Quakers had been harbored in the colony, and to add to the pressure of foes without there were strifes and wranglings among the churches themselves; and so the Puritan leaders called a convention of the entire church to meet at Saybrook. The delegates came on horseback from every part of the colony—from Hartford, Simsbury and the East, from Litchfield, Fairfield and the towns and villages between. It was the season of Commencement in the college. The morning after their arrival the convention met. How readily the imagination recalls the scene! The throng of strangers, the pleasant air of bustle and excitement in the village, and then, at the

stroke of the bell in the ancient church, grave, sober-suited figures come forth from the doors of the villagers. As in a pageant they pass down the village street. On some of the faces under the broad-brimmed hats rests an almost divine benevolence, on others a grim austerity lowers; there is an earnestness and glow about them that attracts, and a severe dignity that repels. How rebukingly they gaze upon the idle dreamer and scribbler under the elms! How with a look they would have crushed the petted and perfumed striplings of the modern pulpit!

The church doors close upon the retreating forms, and there is framed the platform that is to be the sheet-anchor of the Congregational churches for almost twice a hundred years.

At the risk of prolixity I must speak of another excursion that I made to Guilford, sixteen miles distant. The ancient village is dear to all lovers of poetry as the birthplace of one of the earliest and sweetest of American poets, Fitz-Greene Halleck. Here, in 1790, the poet was born, and here he served as a clerk in the village store until called to a position in the counting-room of the Astors and here, after writing a grand lyric and passing

almost half a century in the gay city, courted and caressed by its highest society, he returned, as old age crept on, to bear its burdens and share its pleasures with the friends of his childhood, under the same old elms that had sheltered him in infancy, and here he continued to live until his death in 1867. The poet's grave and monument are shown in the neat Alderbrook Cemetery on the Madison road, about a mile east of the village. The monument is of granite, and bears on its north panel the simple inscription:

Fitz-Greene Halleck,
1790—1867.

with a couplet from his "Marco Bozarris,"

"One of the few, the immortal names
That are not born to die."

On the east panel:

Maria Halleck, 1788—1870.
Nathaniel E. Halleck, 1792—1793.

On the west panel:

Israel Halleck, 1754—1839.
Mary Eliot Halleck, 1762—1819.

On the south panel is a monogram showing the harp and pen united.

It is probable that the poet received his poetic instinct from his mother. The Hallecks, I am told, were of Dutch extraction, and were a cold, phlegmatic race. The Eliots are an old Connecticut family, the same that produced the famous Apostle to the Indians, and are described as quick, fanciful and imaginative.

CHAPTER V

KILLINGWORTH AND ITS BIRDS

WE were seated on the sunny side of a big bowlder in a huckleberry patch. Below, the bushy hill dropped down to some rocky meadows and cornfields, while southward, over many rocky hills and bushy plains, we saw the blue waves of the Sound, populous with sails, and crossed here and there by the steeple of some ancient hamlet or summer village on the shore.

"Why do you call it Killingworth?" I asked.

"It was Kenilworth originally," he replied, "named after the English Kenilworth, in Warwick, from which it is said the early settlers came. It was founded by its Indian name, Hammonasset, and so continued to be known until 1667, when it was changed to Kenilworth. In October, 1663, I may explain, the General Court of Connecticut issued its fiat that 'there should be a town at Hammonasset,' and that same month twelve planters took up their abode here, in obedience, as we sup-

pose, to the dictum of the Connecticut lawgivers. How Kenilworth was gradually changed to Killingworth in the vernacular, and then in the written records, until it was adopted as the town's official name, would make a curious study for a philologist."

We had spent the morning driving leisurely through the old town of Killingworth, over brown heathery hills, through patches of forest showing more russet than gold now, beside the winding Indian River, and through thrifty, well-kept farms. In Killingworth village, about five miles from the sea, we had lingered longest. We found here a fine old street, of noble width, a mile and a half long, lined with substantial dwellings and country seats, some of them with that air of antiquity which assures one that generations have come and gone under their roof-trees. We strolled about the village pelted by the falling leaves, and came at length to the burying-ground, whose moldering *Hic jacets* suggested to my friend much interesting gossip of some of the once famous characters of the place. He began by reading from a mossy monument:

"In memory of Dr. Benjamin Gale, who after a life of usefulness in his profession and a labori-

ous study of the prophecies, fell asleep May 6, A. D. 1790, æt. seventy-five, fully expecting to rise again under the Messiah, and to reign with him on earth. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth and my eyes shall behold him.'

"Dr. Gale," said my friend, "was one of the first of that peculiar sect whose vagaries concerning the second coming of Christ have made much amusement for the thoughtless. His zeal carried him to great lengths on some occasions, tales of which still linger about the village. He was not so well balanced a man as his contemporary, the Rev. Jared Eliot, D.D. This gentleman was a grandson of the famous apostle to the Indians, and besides being an able divine was an excellent physician, an adept in all the natural sciences so far as they were then known, and who wrote several treatises on agriculture for the benefit of farmers. Perhaps his most important discovery was that the fine black sand found on the shores of the Sound, and in greater abundance on Block Island, was in effect iron ore; after many attempts he succeeded, in 1761, in smelting some of it, for which he was honored with a medal by the London Society for the Encouragement of the Arts.

"A man of as great inventive powers as Connecticut ever produced was born and reared in this village. The story of Abel Buell reads like a romance. A few years previous to the Revolution, he was apprenticed to Ebenezer Chittenden, the old goldsmith in whose shop on the main street yonder were made solid gold and silver ware of all sorts for the village dames. The boy's taste and skill is said early to have made him a favorite with his master. At nineteen he married; at twenty he was detected altering the five-pound notes of the colony into those of larger denominations. The neighbors, it seemed, had frequently seen a light in his window at uncanny hours, and finally a village Paul Pry procured a ladder and climbing up to his window detected him in the very act. So cleverly was the work done by this amateur, that the raised notes could only be detected by comparing them with the stubs on the colony book. Then, of course, there arose a hubbub. Matthew Griswold, afterward the famous governor and statesman, was then King's Attorney, and conducted the prosecution; but the prisoner's youth and previous good conduct pleaded so powerfully for him, that the case was pressed as slightly as possible, and a light sentence, for those days, was

passed. He was condemned to be imprisoned, cropped, and branded. This sentence, too, was very lightly carried into effect in the following manner: A small piece of his ear was cut off, which was kept warm on the tip of his tongue till it could be placed on the ear, where it soon grew again. The branding was done high up on the forehead, and consisted in holding a hot iron, shaped like the letter F (Forger) against the skin, until the culprit could say "God save the King."

"Buell was imprisoned first at Norwich, but after a while the influence of his friends secured him the limits here at Killingworth. He improved the opportunity to make 'a lapidary machine,' the first, it is said, ever constructed in this country, and by means of it produced a beautiful ring, consisting of a large stone set about a number of smaller ones, which he presented to Matthew Griswold as a token of respect and gratitude. This ring, it is said, procured him his pardon—at least, he was soon a free man. Soon after, about 1770, he removed to New Haven, probably in order to begin unknown a new career. Bernard Romans, the earliest American map-maker, was then engaged on his map of North America, and at once enlisted Buell in his service. The

west coast of Florida was entirely unknown then, being still under Spanish rule, and Buell was sent to Pensacola to survey and map it. According to Buell's story, the Spanish Governor received his mission with suspicion, and quietly laid a trap for him. One day a merchant whose acquaintance he had made, after complimenting his skill, asked him to show him how to break the Governor's seal, open the letter, and then seal it up again so as to escape detection. Buell unsuspectingly complied, and was summarily arrested and imprisoned on an island. Here, however, he succeeded in building a boat, and with a boy for his sole companion put to sea, and after a voyage of several days succeeded in reaching one of our southern ports. The map was engraved by Buell and Amos Doolittle, and printed at New Haven during the Revolution from types cast by Buell himself. His work on the map led the Legislature to restore him his civil rights, and after the close of the war he was employed in coining copper pennies for the new Government. A machine he constructed for this work, capable of coining one hundred and twenty a minute, is said to have been the progenitor of those now in use. He was in England early in 1800, and in one of the interior towns found

the city fathers in a high state of excitement over an iron bridge recently built, which, through some error of construction, was rendered useless. Buell stopped a few days, and, by introducing some slight changes, remedied the whole matter. He received for his skill, it is said, a purse of £100. He died friendless and alone in the New Haven Almshouse in 1825."

Seated in the huckleberry patch we made some inquiry whether the old town was the scene of one of Longfellow's most charming poems. All readers of the poet are familiar with his "Birds of Killingworth," one of the tales told at the Wayside Inn. The legend, it will be remembered, is that the farmers of Killingworth in town meeting assembled put a price on the heads of birds. The poem describes the convening of the town meeting, the preceptor's fruitless plea for the birds, the scenes of destruction that followed the passage of the act, and its sad results, which ended finally in the revocation of the cruel edict; the whole being prettily interwoven with the love of the preceptor for "fair Almira in the upper class," and its fortunate issue. We asked our friend if the poem was founded on a literal fact, and as he could give us no satisfaction, we applied some

time after by letter to Mr. Henry Hull, the venerable town clerk of Killingworth. Mr. Hull's reply was as follows:

"I received your letter in due time, and as soon as I could, looked in the record of town votes, supposing the town gave a bounty for killing certain birds and animals, but I did not find any vote. One thing I know by actual knowledge: When I was young, say fourteen years, the men in the northern part of the town did yearly in the spring, choose two leaders, and then the two sides formed. Their rules were: The side that got beaten should pay the bills. Their special game was the hawk, the owl, the crow, the blackbird, and any other bird considered to be mischievous in pulling up corn and the like. Also the squirrels, except gray squirrels, and all other animals that were considered to be mischievous. Some years each side would bring them in by the bushel; it was followed up only a few years, for the birds began to grow scarce. This was probably the basis for Mr. Longfellow's poem."

This letter was sent to Mr. Ernest Longfellow, with a request for information on the subject, and elicited the following reply from Mr. Samuel Longfellow, the brother of the poet:

“CAMBRIDGE, October 21.

“DEAR SIR: My nephew has handed me your letter enclosing Mr. Hull’s in regard to my brother’s poem, ‘The Birds of Killingworth.’ I cannot say whether the writer of the poem had ever heard the story of the crusade against the birds which Mr. Hull relates. I found among his papers a newspaper cutting—a report of a debate in the Connecticut Legislature upon a bill offering a bounty upon the heads of birds believed to be injurious to the farmers, in which debate a member from Killingworth took part. The name may have taken his fancy, and upon this slight hint he may have built up his story. You will observe that in the poem he throws back the time to a hundred years ago. But I cannot speak with certainty upon this matter.”

CHAPTER VI

NEW LONDON, AN OLD NEW ENGLAND SEAPORT*

AS one glides into the quaint old port of New London, in Southeastern Connecticut, over one of the many coves that form a feature of its harbor, one may get a glimpse, between the antiquated warehouses, of several old hulks fast to their piers, and as disconsolate in appearance as anything well can be whose work in life is accomplished. Nature is slowly breaking them up,—doing what their owners lack the courage to do. Their spars, broken from their fastenings, hang at every conceivable angle above the decks; their cordage is frayed and rotten; flakes of paint have peeled from their seamy sides, and down in their great empty holds the bilge-water ripples an accompaniment to the murmur of the waves that lap their sides as the tides come and go. These are the whaleships, the agents that brought prosperity and even opulence to the little provincial town.

* From "Lippincott's Magazine." January, 1888.

Mare Liberum is the legend on the city seal, and never was a more expressive motto penned. The town is one of the favored few so situated that they must seek their fortune on the seas or not at all. It is prettily built on a bluff or headland having a little plateau at the base, which is indented with several small bays or coves, thus giving it a magnificent water front. On the east is the Thames (river it is called, but really an estuary of the Sound), extending inland fourteen miles to the busy city of Norwich, and navigable half its length for vessels drawing twenty-five feet of water. The harbor is the best on the coast, sheltered, capacious, with no bar, no swift currents, no ice, and furnished with a natural breakwater in the hills and vales of Fisher's Island, eight miles from its mouth.

But two avenues of employment were open to the early colonists,—agriculture and commerce. Debarred the first by the rocky and sterile nature of their soil, the men of New London turned with generous confidence to their neighbor, the gray old sea. Unlike the men of Nantucket, however, they were seamen from the first, not mere fishermen. With the aid of good Master Coit they built pin-naces and shallops of twenty and thirty tons' bur-

den, and set out on trading voyages along the coast. They even rounded the Cape of the Cod, and sailed proudly into the port of Boston with their cargoes of peltries and wampum, to be exchanged for clothing, household goods, powder and lead. A little later, grown bolder, they extended their voyages to Newfoundland, and delighted the blue-nosed Gauls of Reynolds' and Petty Harbor with their stores of country-cured beef and pork and other provisions. Their enterprise also led them southward. They early made voyages to New York, stopping for traffic at every considerable town along the coast, and even ventured as far down the stormy coasts as Virginia and the "Menbadoes" in quest of tobacco, dry hides and buckskins. But these were mere efforts of the fledgling trying its wings, skirmishings along the outskirts of the great field which later they were to occupy in force.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century Master Coit was succeeded in his shipyard by his son James, and his two sons-in-law, Hugh Mould and John Stevens. These master builders constructed three fine barques. With the largest of these, the "Endeavor," under his command, a brave sea-

man, Captain Samuel Chester, bearing in mind, no doubt, the couplet, that

Little ships should keep near shore,
But larger craft may venture more,

determined on a voyage to the West Indies. Very quietly he laid in a cargo of provisions, pork and beef well cured, cooper's stock, and several tough, hardy ponies, bought from the neighboring farmers, which he judged would find a ready sale on the plantations; then, with his papers duly signed by Master John Smith, the first customs collector of the port, he sailed away around the Fisher's Island headlands and out to sea. Twenty-eight days sufficed to lay his vessel alongside the quay in the tropical island of Barbadoes,—an island prolific of flowers, fruits, and sweets, the lowermost of the pretty group of the Caribbees.

Captain Chester found the planters quite ready to open a trade with his colony, and was home again in less than two months, the hold of his little vessel well filled with sugar and molasses, and, half hidden by the barrels and hogsheads, a cask of rum, shipped by the dons with a view to opening up a trade in the article. Unfortunately for them, however, the magistrates of Connecticut

had observed the bad effects of the Barbadoes article on the people of the Massachusetts Plantation and, shortly before the "Endeavor's" arrival, had sent down to Master Smith an order sternly interdicting the landing of "Barbadoes liquor, commonly called rum, kill-devil, and the like," in any place in their jurisdiction, under pain of forfeiture to the commonwealth. Captain Chester had, therefore, the pleasure of delivering the precious cask to the authorities, and probably of seeing it knocked down to the highest bidder on government account, although he lived to see the obnoxious article the most important and lucrative item in the trade of the two colonies.

As the barrels and hogsheads, bubbling over with sweetness, trundled up from the "Endeavor's" hold, they opened the eyes of the shrewd, calculating skippers who crowded the wharf, and of the portly, linen-clad merchants whose office windows overlooked the busy scene. From this moment a spirit of unrest, of shadowy hopes and ambitions, seized upon the little community. People began to talk in warehouse, office, store, of the fortunes to be made in the West India trade, and several firms were not slow to embark in it.

Captain John Jeffrey, a master shipbuilder, was induced to come over from Portsmouth, England. Land for a shipyard was given him in Groton, on the opposite bank of the Thames, and both yards were kept busy supplying the eager demands of the merchants. Docks were constructed, and great barn-like warehouses, which still remain to show how well men builded in those days, were erected, while streets blocked with drays and piers cumbered with merchandise attested the growing commerce of the town.

The palmy days of the West India trade extended from 1720 nearly to the period of the Revolution. The annals of few seaport towns portray such pleasant scenes of bustle and animation as were to be witnessed in the port during this era of prosperity. A glance at the map will show that north and west of the town is a large extent of country, of which it is the natural outlet. Its cargoes for export were mostly drawn from this region, which also absorbed the larger share of its imports. These goods were transported to and from the town in heavy, capacious goods-wagons drawn by horses, and sometimes, if the distance was short, by oxen. It was no uncommon sight of a summer morning—four vessels

perhaps then loading at the docks for Barbadoes or Martinique*—for a hundred of these creaking, lumbering vehicles to pass in procession down the village street, each drawn by its team of four or six horses, attended by suffocating clouds of dust, and presided over by a red-shirted, sombrero-crowned teamster, bronzed and muscular, and armed with a long whip, which ever and anon he flourished about the ears of the leaders with a report like that of a pistol. The wagons were laden with as varied a stock of commodities as their points of departure had been different. There were wheat and pease in bags, and kiln-dried corn in barrels, tierces of hams, barrels of pork and beef, pots of butter, round, savory cheeses from the green pastures of Lebanon and Colchester, and—pleasing break in the uniformity of the line—piles of pipe-staves of aromatic spruce, and hickory hoops neatly shaven in remote country workshops.

* In proof that my picture is not overdrawn I cite the following extract from the annals of the port: "On the 7th June, 1717, Prentiss, Christophers, and Picket, in their several vessels, arrived from Barbadoes. They left the harbor together, arrived out the same day, sailed again on their return voyage the same day, and made Montauk Point together."

Although the wagons now appeared in continuous line, they had begun their voyaging at widely scattered points. Some bore the products of Putnam's rocky farm at Pomfret; others had gathered their stores along the shores of Gardner's Lake and the romantic banks of the Yantic; one had rumbled down from Norwich, perhaps from the near vicinity of the little drug store where Benedict Arnold weighed out potions and meditated a military career; while its neighbor had journeyed from Coventry, and was laden, perhaps, with the products of the pleasant homestead which nourished Captain Nathan Hale through infancy and youth and imparted the elements of such noble manhood. There were few towns in what are now Tolland, Windham and New London counties but had their representatives in the group. Behind the wagoners frequently came the drovers, with horses and cattle for the plantations. The passing of this motley procession, the creaking, lumbering vehicles, the oaths and gesticulations of the drivers, the clouds of dust, and the occasional stampede of frightened colts or steers, attracted groups of sightseers, and presented elements of the picturesque that one might go far in these degenerate days and not witness. The

teamsters formed a not inconsiderable guild at this time. In connection with the drovers they had a tavern of their own near the water front, at which they always put up, and where their teams were stabled. Their cargoes sold and unladen, they would assemble at the tavern and indulge in merry carousals, and after large quantities of vile tobacco and viler Barbadoes liquor had been consumed would parade the streets in noisy bands, to the no small dismay of the order-loving citizens. On these occasions, if they fell in with an officer from one of his Majesty's cruisers lying in the harbor home-faring from a visit to some fair Juliet of the town, it generally happened that he found himself and his smart uniform rolled in the gutter. But such breaches of the peace were neither frequent nor flagrant. In the morning, their orgies ended, they shipped their cargoes of sugar, molasses and rum, and returned to their distant homes in much the same manner as they had come.

But the golden days of the West India traffic passed with the closing of the colonial era, never to return. The war of the Revolution closed the port and put a stop to all commercial operations. The town was vastly patriotic during the war, but fought best where she was most at home,—on the

seas. Her ships were turned into privateers, and, manned by her seamen,—accounted the best and bravest privateersmen that ever floated,—scoured the ocean in all directions in search of the enemy's merchantmen. Many were their adventures, tragical and otherwise, many their deeds of prowess; and were it not that the writer's pen is set to record the more peaceful exploits of the merchant marine, he could a hundred moving tales relate in which they figured as chief actors,—tales of attack and repulse, chase, flight, capture, reprisal and stratagems innumerable,—and how now and then a privateer sailed proudly into the home port, the captured enemy vessel following in her wake with the British lion on her ensign, floating heels upward, and the docks lined with eager patriots, who greeted the conquering heroes with salvos of huzzas.

The period that followed the war extending down as late as the year 1819 is one not pleasant to contemplate; those loyal to the city speak of it with a species of pain, and gladly pass it by to present brighter phases of its history. For this entire period, with the exception of transient bursts of activity in 1795 and 1805, the business of the port was at a standstill. There was literally

no inducement for ventures on the ocean. Because France and England chose to be at war, neutral commerce must perforce be swept from the seas, and, in the case of American commerce, at least, this dictum of the powers was fully carried out by the almost insane acts of our own Government. New London suffered in those days more than many of her sister ports, her trade having been largely with the rival powers and their dependencies. The quiet of a rural town settled upon her streets, the brown sea-moss gathered on the unused wharves, great ships lay idly at their moorings until they fell to pieces with age, the rat and cockroach domiciled in the empty warehouses; only the croakers were busy going about the streets and writing "Ichabod!" on the walls.

The first faint waves of the whaling excitement reached the town in 1819; why at this particular juncture rather than before it is difficult to determine. Undoubtedly destiny controlled the matter, for the opportunity had long lain in the city's grasp. Whales had been seen in the Sound from the earliest times, and captured by boats from the shore. Those curious in the matter will find in the records of a General Court held at Hartford, in May, 1647, an order giving Mr. Whiting and

others the exclusive privilege of catching whales "within these liberties" for the period of seven years.* In 1785, Sag Harbor, on the Long Island coast, sent the brig "Lucy," McKay master, and the brig "Ann," Havens master, on a whaling voyage. The "Lucy" returned, May 15, with three hundred and sixty barrels of oil on board; the "Ann" June 4, with three hundred barrels. The success of this venture created quite a ripple of excitement in nautical circles. Thomas Allen, the eccentric genius who compiled the marine lists of the "New London Gazette," appended to his announcement of their return the following stirring piece of advice: "Now, my horse jockeys, beat your horses and cattle into spears, lances, harpoons and whaling-gear, and let us all strike out. Many spouts ahead; whales are plenty, and to be had for the catching." But the shrewd old veterans of the West India trade still declined the hazardous enterprise. In 1805 a spirited attempt was

* An old diary of the date of 1718, still preserved in the city, contains the following item: "Jan. 13, Comfort Davis hath hired my whale-boat to go a-whaling to Fisher's Island till the 20th of next month, to pay 20 shillings for her hire, and if he stays longer 30 shillings. If she be lost, and they get nothing, he is to pay me £3, and if they get a fish, £3 10s."

made to open the whale-fishery and make it one of the industries of the port. Early in that year the New London Company, of which Dr. S. H. Lee was the controlling spirit, purchased of Captain John Barber his new vessel, the "Dauphin," which had been built with special reference to the whale-fishery. Shortly after, the company purchased the ship "Leonidas," of New York. Both vessels sailed in 1806, and returned full in 1807. Several other voyages were made by them with equal success; but the Embargo Act and the war which shortly followed summarily ended this and all other traffic. The business revived in 1819, influenced, no doubt, by the high price to which whale-oil advanced, following its general use for illuminating purposes, and from this period became the one engrossing, hazardous, lucrative pursuit of the port.

Two men were the pioneers of the trade in New London—Thomas N. Williams and Daniel Deslon, the former's name still borne by one of the only two firms in the city that continue in the business. Both were experienced merchants and practical seamen. Williams sent out the brig "Mary," Captain Davis, and Deslon the brig "Mary Ann," Captain Englis, and the ship "Carrier," Captain Alexander Douglas (all three com-

manders had made voyages during the temporary revival of business in 1805-08). The "Mary" sailed down the Atlantic coast, cruised about the Brazil Banks, and was back in ten months and twenty days with seven hundred and forty-four barrels of whale-oil and seventy-eight of sperm on board. The "Carrier" returned about the same time with nine hundred and twenty-eight. These voyages were counted fairly successful; but when the "Mary" returned from her second voyage, after a year's absence, with two thousand barrels on board, the possibilities of the whale-fishery fairly dawned on the minds of merchant and skipper, and much the same scenes of excitement were witnessed as had occurred at the founding of the West India trade, nearly a century before. The shipyards were unequal to the demands made upon them by the eager merchants, and agents were sent into the neighboring ports as far westward as New York to purchase ships. The skipper on the Sound in those days, when asked his destination, would generally answer, "New London and a market," but it was his craft, and not her cargo, for which the market was sought. Vessels of pretty much every description were purchased if they had the two requisites of stout

timbers, and good carrying capacity, and no more novel and interesting sight could be witnessed than a whaling-fleet in those days, made up, as it was, of every class of vessels known to nautical science, from the stately three-decked ship to the diminutive but rakish schooner.

By 1830 six heavy firms and fifty vessels were actively engaged in the industry, and the town once more began to assume the appearance of an active commercial center. The streets were again vocal with the din of traffic. The great warehouses were filled with bales of whalebone and boxes of pure white, odorless spermaceti. On the docks thousands of barrels of oil were piled tier above tier, the upper layer being covered with seaweed and kept moist by daily douches of seawater; this, it was early discovered, being the best method of preserving the oleaginous product. Heavy farm wagons laden with provisions again rattled into the town; and all day long the din of the anvil and tap of the cooper's adze were to be heard in the long, low shops that covered every available inch of ground along the docks, where the stout oaken casks with hoops of iron which were to hold the precious product were manufactured, hundreds in a day.

The whaling industry was far more beneficial to the town in general than the West India trade which it supplanted. The latter made a few rich, but added little to the general wealth of the town and nothing to its population; in addition, it made the vile liquors of the tropics almost as free as water, introduced a looseness of morals from which the port suffered for years. The whaling system, on the other hand, was coöperative in spirit and practice, and its immense profits were divided equitably among those engaged in it. The owner was careful to see that the right description of vessel was furnished, and that she was properly equipped and provisioned. The cooper put no defective stock in his barrels; the blacksmith tested his iron before using it. The captain on the quarter-deck, mate, sailing-master, boat-steerer, cook in the galley, sailor before the mast, each felt that on his individual skill, energy, and fidelity depended in a measure the success of the voyage and the magnitude of the "share" that would fall to him at its close; and this spirit of self-interest placed the town in the front rank of the oil-producing ports, and poured two millions of dollars into its coffers annually for a term of years.

The stores of a vessel of the first class fitted for a two years' voyage consisted of two hundred and fifty barrels of pork, two hundred barrels of beef, and fifty of flour, with bread, rice, corn, vinegar, codfish, pease and molasses in proportion. Her equipment comprised lances, harpoons, spades, several hundred fathoms of line, and between two and three thousand empty barrels. She was manned by from thirty to thirty-five men, who were generally selected by the captain. She also carried a carpenter, a cooper, and occasionally, if one presented himself, a surgeon, but ordinarily the captain's medicine chest was the only resource in case of sickness. In shaping their courses the vessels always followed the movements of their prey. Early voyages extended no farther than the Brazil Banks, as by the time these were exhausted the vessel was "full;" later the cold, barren shores of Desolation Island, Delagoa Bay, the west coast of Patagonia, the islands of the Pacific, the Kamtchatkan Sea, Baffin's Bay, and the icy waters of the Arctic yielded fruitful harvests to the bold voyagers. A favorite two years' voyage in later times was to proceed first to the Gulf of Guinea, thence around the Cape of Good Hope, through the Indian and Pacific Oceans to the Sea

of Kamtchatka, which was the half way station in this circumnavigation of the globe. From this point the vessel proceeded south through the Pacific, touching at the Sandwich and Society Islands, coasted along the Patagonian shore, rounded Cape Horn, and then proceeded homeward *via* the Brazil Banks and the West Indies. When, after all this weary round, she entered the familiar harbor, if she counted two thousand barrels of oil in her hold her voyage was considered a successful one; if three thousand, a fortunate one.* On being laid alongside the dock a careful inventory of her cargo was taken, as to both quality and quantity; it was then divided in the following proportions: to the captain, one-sixteenth; the first mate, one twenty-fifth; the second mate, one-fortieth; the third mate, one sixty-fifth; the boat-steerer, one seventy-fifth; and each seaman, one one hundred and twenty-fifth; the remainder going to the owners, from which, however, they

* Even the latter figure was sometimes exceeded. Captain James Smith, in three successive voyages to the Island of Desolation, in 1840-42-44, made four thousand barrels each time. and the ship "Robert Bowne" is recorded as coming into port in 1848 with four thousand eight hundred and fifty barrels on board. But these were exceptional

must deduct the cost of equipment, insurance and other expenses. Whale-oil has been known to sell in the port as high as forty cents per gallon, and as low as eighteen and one-half; but, placing the average price at thirty cents, and the average "catch" at two thousand five hundred barrels, we find that the ordinary seamen received \$190 as his share; the boat-steerer, \$316.50; the mates, \$365, \$475, and \$950, respectively; and the captain, \$1,484; leaving to the owners \$14,440. If to these figures we add as much more for sperm-oil, spermaceti and whalebone, we have a handsome return for the outfit and labor.

When a town has a hundred vessels and two thousand men—half its population—at sea, it becomes weatherwise; the volumes it chiefly consults are the sky, the winds, the sea, and the clouds; then the cry of the sea-gull forebodes a storm; seaweed and kelp, borne in by the tides, are harbingers of wreck; each trivial incident possesses a deep significance; and though cheerfulness and even mirth may seem to prevail, a latent element of dread, a feeling that disaster is about to fall upon the town, lurks in every breast. After a storm, wan women climb the hills and scan the sea-line with anxious eyes; the wise old sea-dogs

who linger about the taverns in various stages of dismemberment shake their heads; and news from Race Rock, Point Judith, and Montauk is awaited with feverish anxiety. The most strenuous efforts were made in those days to obtain early intelligence of the approach of vessels making the harbor. Each of the eight principal shipping firms had its own code of signals. Keen eyes were ever on the watch, and when a home-faring vessel pushed her bows around the headlands of Fisher's Island with her signals at the peak, her name, condition and owners were at once known to the eager watchers. If she flew the blue crest of Williams & Havens, it was known to half the town in a few moments that their good ship the "Leonidas," last reported at Fayal, and daily expected, was making the harbor; or if she flew the red pennant of Benjamin Brown's Sons, it could be no other than their ship the "Clematis," which had sailed round the world in ten months and twenty-nine days. News of the arrival of a ship spread rapidly through the town,—if long overdue or reported lost it was announced by joyous peals of the church bells,—and long before the vessel reached her pier the wharves were crowded with women and children half frantic

with joy at the prospect of meeting dear ones after years of absence. And when at last the vessel was made fast, and wives and mothers were locked in the embrace of manly arms, even a pessimist must have been impressed with the capacity for happiness exhibited at times by the great heart of humanity. There was a dark side to the picture, however, and far too frequently the smothered groan or the cry of despair was heard, as a familiar face was not found amid the throng, and some sympathizing comrade related the particulars of the death of husband or son, perhaps from fever in the tropics, or amid Arctic ice, or in the casualties attending the capture of their prey. It was rarely that a ship came in with the roll of her crew intact. In the oldest churchyard are some pathetic memorials of the dangers of the traffic. It is a pretty place, this churchyard, on the crest of the hill on which the city is built, albeit sadly neglected now, with lush grass covering the graves and its stones scarred and broken by the elements.* Here, side by side with governors, senators, judges, generals, the fathers of the commonwealth, rests the dust of many of these toilers

* This in 1888. The ground is now kept in excellent order.

of the sea; nor are the tombstones rare that bear inscriptions like the following: "In memory of Pyram Adams, Esq., who died July 1, 1776, aged 64 years, and of his three sons, William, who died at St. Pierre's, Martinico, Apr. 4, 1778, aged 33 years; Alexander, who was lost at sea in the year 1782, aged 35 years; and Thomas, who died in the island of St. Helena, Sept. 8, 1815, aged 55 years." How many of the warm young lives of the town were sacrificed in the traffic cannot be computed. The two other churchyards within the city limits, and the pretty Cedar Grove Cemetery, a mile outside, hold the dust of many, but the large majority "dropped in their heavy-shotted hammock-shrouds" into their ocean sepulcher, and their names are borne by no mortuary piles.

To-day the tide of the city's prosperity is again at its ebb, and the stranger who sojourns here is surprised to find, amid the evidences of former business activity, the quiet and retirement of an inland country town, albeit there are sanguine ones who hold that the flood will return again, and that a brilliant commercial future yet awaits the port. No old continental town with a thousand years of history could be more attractive to the man of vivid fancy and antiquarian tendencies.

Even to make the tour of the docks intelligently, mastering all they teach, would require weeks. The shipping offices, the warehouses, the junk shops, the government pier, with the "Relief" lightship alongside, its lighthouse stores and other *impedimenta* scattered about, and the genial, generous old tar in charge, who lets one into all the secrets of Uncle Sam's coast service with a freedom simply astonishing in a government official, the gray old hulks swinging to the tide, the fishing-smacks and the fishermen with their weird tales of the sea, the custom house, a massive stone building, presided over by a gallant Major of the late war, wherein the drowsy air of a by-gone period prevails and two ancient clerks transact all the routine business,—each is a study in itself, and presents new phases and possibilities as one advances.

Another point of interest is the Old Mill, in a secluded dell forming part of the old Winthrop estate, where Jordan's Brook comes tumbling and foaming down amid bowlders, to plunge at last into the Mill Cove. This mill was built by one Richard Manwaring in 1712, and, after grinding steadily for a century and a half, now rests from its labors, having become the property of a gentle-

man who will preserve it, with all its appointments complete, as a relic of the olden time.

The shipping office of to-day gives little hint of the activity that once prevailed there. It occupies a long, low building adjoining the warehouses of the firm, with its rear windows looking out on the company's docks. Three desks accommodate the clerical force now employed: its walls are hung with lithographs depicting various nautical scenes,—the company's vessels, the pursuit and killing of the whale, the capture of seals and sea elephants in which latter industry the firm has still several vessels employed.

In its rear, almost poking her bowsprit into the window, is a whaling barque "Nile," a veteran of 1840, a ship with a history exceeded by none in the merchant service, her owner asserts with a touch of pardonable pride. She is of the shape and rig in vogue forty years ago.—square at the bows, wide amidships, lined with six feet of solid oak forward as a protection against Arctic ice, three-decked, capacious and clumsy. She escaped the fate of others of her class, that went to form the bottom blockade of Charleston Harbor in 1861, by being in commission at the time and absent on a whaling cruise. In the summer of

1865 she was out on the northwest coast after whales in company with a score or more of craft of her calling from New London, Nantucket, New Bedford, and other towns along shore. Early one fine morning the "Shenandoah" was discovered in the midst of the fleet, burning and pillaging indiscriminately. Six vessels were burned as they lay powerless to escape the swift steamer, and their crews and such parts of their cargo as were deemed sufficiently valuable transferred to the privateer, which then approached the "Nile." She was not, however, destroyed, but a bond was exacted from her captain declaring the fact of her capture on the high seas and acknowledging her to be the property of the Confederate States of America. One hundred and twenty men, the crews of the burned vessels, were then transferred to the "Nile," and she was released, while the "Shenandoah" stood on her course in quest of other quarry. The "Nile," with her castaways on board, made the best of her way to San Francisco, and there had the satisfaction of learning that the war had come to an end some months before.

The quarter of the city of which we write is the favorite resort of the veteran shipmasters of the port, although but four or five of those who were

active in the stirring days of 1830-40 remain to tell the tale. Although safely moored in a snug harbor, the worthy old tars find that time hangs heavy on their hands. They read the shipping-lists in the newspapers, walk about the streets and docks, meet in store or office, and live over old times. They are fond of lounging in the cool corridors of the custom house, and of picking up there such items of marine intelligence as may be floating about; but after all is said and done there are hours that are tedious for lack of employment. I know of no class of men more capable of satisfying an omnivorous thirst for information. Having visited in the course of their business all countries and seas, and studied with Yankee inquisitiveness and acuteness every object or incident that presented itself, they have almost insensibly become possessed of a fund of knowledge that many a scholar would give years to obtain. Let not the tyro, however, imagine it an easy thing to unlock these stores. A becoming humility must be observed, with due deference to the other's opinion, and instant appreciation of such bits of anecdote as are doled out, before that generous confidence can be established which will lead the veteran to display to advantage his unlimited pow-

ers of narration. Various expedients are adopted to pass away the time. One is a grocer, and weighs out coffee and samples sugar as calmly as once he rode the billowy waste or poised the lance for the death-thrust. Another has a little office down by the docks, in the rear of a hardware store, with a junk shop underneath, and writes policies of insurance for such patrons as call upon him. He is surrounded by the insignia of his former calling,—the log-book of his first voyage, maps and charts, nautical instruments, the signal code of the port,—and, as his window looks out on the harbor and on the blue Fisher's Island headlands, which his ship has rounded scores of times in making the port, it is fair to assume that reminiscences of a well-spent seafaring life of fifty years occupy by far the largest share of the worthy captain's thoughts.

The log-book of the ship "Wabash," which sailed from New London, July 23, 1829, lies before us,—a quaint volume with covers of parchment and leaves formed of the coarse, thick paper in use fifty years ago and still affected by gentlemen of antiquarian tendencies. In its pages are entered day by day the minutiae of the voyage, — wind, weather, bearings, discovery of a wreck,

calling at forts, provisions purchased or consumed, sickness, death, mutiny, desertion,—while every capture of a whale is celebrated by a pen-and-ink drawing of the monster in his dying agony. So the record continues for weeks and months and years, until the world has been circumnavigated and the vessel again enters the home port.

CHAPTER VII

GROTON AND MYSTIC

GROTON BANK, Groton Centre, Poquonnock, Noank, West Mystic, Mystic, Head-of-Mystic, Fort Hill, Pequot Hill, Porter's Rocks—all are localities more or less notable in the town of Groton, which lies across the Thames from New London, and covers a territory nearly eight miles square. It is a land of breezy ridges and sunny valleys, with stern, precipitous granite ledges facing the Sound and walling in the valleys, a region almost undiscovered by the tourist, but well worthy his attention, as much for its natural beauty as for its historical interest. Originally it was a part of New London, known locally as the "east side," but its inhabitants in 1705 succeeded in inducing the General Court to incorporate them as a separate town, which town they named Groton in honor of Governor Winthrop's English home in Suffolk County.

Our first expedition into Groton was in search

of the town records; to our surprise and pleasure we found them lodged in one of the oldest houses in America, and one which is perhaps the best specimen of colonial architecture extant. It is known as the old Avery mansion, and was built in 1656 by Judge James Avery, one of the original settlers of Groton. It is a house of character. Even the casual passer-by notices it, and wishes to stop and inquire as to its history. It is ballasted by two heavy stone chimneys, its frame is of white oak, heavy enough to furnish forth two modern houses, its roofs are high and steep, the upper story projecting over the lower as in the blockhouses of colonial Indian warfare. In two large safes in the front parlor the town records are kept. This parlor is a study. Its ceiling is low, and in the center is a huge beam, white-washed, and still bearing the marks of the hewer's broad ax. The sills—8×8 beams—are placed *above* the flooring, and are as sound in appearance as when laid more than two hundred and thirty years ago. The present owner is the ninth Avery to whom the old house has descended from eldest son to eldest son, with the broad green fields adjoining it. We found the aged Town Clerk, Mr. James Avery, busy transcribing the generations

that had swarmed from the old hive for a genealogy of the Averys now being compiled in Rochester, New York.

If these old white-oak timbers could speak, we should hear about the funeral of the first James Avery in 1681, who, having been a magistrate on the bench and representative to the General Court, was buried suitably to his rank. We should have details of the grand funeral—the name of the person “appointed to look to the burning of the wine and beating of the cider for the occasion”—of the gallons of wine, the barrels of cider, the hundred-weights of sugar, the gloves and gold rings furnished the pallbearers, and the white kid gloves for the attending ministers. For a funeral cost something in those days—often as much as £200.

In 1718 the old house saw the first innovation of moment. Tea was brought over from the settlement at New London, and passed from hand to hand as the family and a few neighbors sat around the capacious fireplace. Madame Avery was skilled in all manner of cooking, but she admitted that she knew not how to prepare this bitter herb for the table. At last the council decided that it should be cooked and served with boiled pork, as greens; but there were many wry faces when the

dish came to be eaten. At last they learned to steep it, as they did their boneset and other medicinal herbs, and to disguise it with milk and sugar, but it was months before the family came to enjoy the strange beverage. Two years later they had their first sight of wheat flour; rye and Indian corn having been before that the staple breadstuffs. Then, in 1730, they were thrown into spasms of curiosity at seeing a horse and wagon driven up the lawn. Hitherto the only means of locomotion had been on horseback, the lady sitting behind her cavalier on a pillion, with her arm about his waist. A little later, in 1733, the family gathered at the breakfast table, and inspected, tasted and passed judgment upon two or three Irish potatoes which had been raised in the garden in beds, much as we now raise carrots and beets. In 1734 the old timbers might have lost their identity by being smothered in paint, which that year was used for the first time in this country; as a matter of fact, however, the old house waited a century longer before receiving its first coat of paint. In 1740 the first sleigh drove up to the door, and the Avery boys and girls, of whom always there was a houseful, tumbled in for their first sleigh ride. By and by war came, and the

Averys that had gone out from the old hive made a good showing in the ranks. The thunder of the guns on the day Fort Griswold was defended was plainly heard here, and in the afternoon a breathless horseman came riding up with news—nine Averys had been killed in defense of the fort and many more wounded, among the latter Col. Parke Avery, then living in the old house; and very soon a long line of wagons came over the hill, bearing the wounded to be tenderly nursed back to health and vigor by the patriotic women of the homestead. It was in 1783 that the first wall paper made its appearance, and years after that before its white and sanded floors were made acquainted with carpets. The old house has recently had a very narrow escape from destruction, for the new line of the New York, Providence and Boston Railroad, now building to connect with the new bridge across the Thames, passes within a few feet of its western gable, and had not the engineers deflected their line a trifle, would have passed through it. It is a pity that none of the old family furniture has been preserved. "My mother had fourteen children," said Mr. Avery, speaking of this matter, "and every time they came to visit me they would take away some article of furni-



ture, saying that if they gave me the old house, they must have the furniture—so it is all gone.”

The ancient records of Groton found in the old house are interesting, but not so much so as the story of the man who indited them. This first Town Clerk was named John Davie, an educated man, graduated at Harvard in 1681. His writing in the town books is in a firm, clear, clerkly hand, and the ink has faded but little during the nearly two hundred years it has been spread upon the page. Soon after his graduation he married a Hartford woman, daughter of John Richards and sister to Governor Saltonstall's wife, and settled down to the life of a farmer here on Poquonnock Plains. Six children were born to him here, as he has recorded in the town register. One day he was hoeing corn on the plains in company with John Packer, a neighbor, both men in homespun and barefooted, with their sleeves rolled up to their elbows and their trousers up to their knees, when a stranger, clad in the latest London fashion, appeared, and asked the official if he was John Davie. “Yes,” was the reply. “Then I salute you Sir John Davie of Creedy Court, Devon,” he replied. Tradition says that the new Baronet finished his row—he was hoeing on a wager with his

fellow-worker—then accompanied his visitor to the brown homestead, treated him to cake and wine, and learned the whole story—how his uncle, Sir John Davie, Bart., had died without male issue, leaving him sole heir. In a short time the Poquonnock farmer exchanged the brown farmhouse for baronial halls. He never forgot his native land, however, and always retained his interest in Groton. He aided the settlers to build their new church, and when it was finished presented it with a silver communion set. He also made gifts to his relatives, and was one of the early benefactors of Yale College. We remarked on hearing this story that it read like a romance; it is, however, sober truth.

They tell a story here of the war of 1812 worth relating: One day Commodore Hardy in the "Ramilies" and Sir Hugh Pigott in the "Orpheus" hove in sight, and the people came to the conclusion that New London was to be attacked. Major Smith at once manned Fort Griswold with volunteers from the vicinity, while the women and children fled into the interior. At the last moment the Major found he had no wadding for his cannon, and sent out a squad in search of flannel for that purpose. Unfortunately all the

houses and stores were closed, and they could secure none. Returning, they met on the street Mrs. Anna Bailey, who, on hearing their story, dropped her flannel petticoat, and told them to give it to the British at the cannon's mouth. The officers and garrison were greatly elated by the lady's spirit, and Hardy would no doubt have fared ill had he attacked. When the danger was over, Commodore Decatur gave a grand ball, at which Mrs. Bailey was the heroine of the occasion. Later her fame spread throughout the country, and she was visited by Lafayette, Monroe, Jackson, and other notables. "Mother Bailey" died in 1851 aged ninety-two years.

Mystic village is the point at which one should station himself in order to discover the picturesque and untraveled ways of the ancient town of Groton and possess himself of her more interesting history. It lies between the Pequot and Narragansett countries (the village includes the old Pequot fort where Captain Mason gained his victory over that war-like tribe), and in various directions are localities famed in the border warfare of colonial times. The mouth of the Mystic just beyond the town is studded with islands. Fisher's Island lies just across the narrow Fisher's Island Sound. The

river for three miles above the village is a broad and deep estuary, at places expanding into bays, and above this its bed, quite to its sources in the Lantern Hill range, is charmingly romantic and picturesque. North and East lie those vast stretches of sunken lands which once formed the refuge of the Indians when hard pressed. They are a strange feature of the landscape—in places showing ponds of inky-black water, again quivering jelly-like masses of bogs, in other places thickets of bushes and aquatic plants.

We have communed with local antiquaries in regard to the origin of the name Mystic, with no satisfactory results, however, and are left to form our own conjectures. Perhaps the play of the fogs around the hills and rocky islets—a curtain that rises and falls, advances and recedes, producing the fleeting scenes of the phantasmagoria—suggested it; perhaps the name came from the sorceries of Indian medicine-men; perhaps from some sect of mystics that originated here. But however the name came, it is pretty sure to stick. The people are pleased with it; it is novel and distinctive, gives them an individuality, so to speak. The old port is quiet now. Occasionally a collier sails in or a fishing steamer puts to

sea. Thirty years ago it was a busy, bustling center of the shipbuilding industry. Some of the old ways and sail lofts remain, and now and then you meet a veteran of the shipyards who is not averse to giving you reminiscences of better days when Mystic was famous the world over for her ships, when vessels were advertised as Mystic-built bottoms because of their high reputation.

The first Mystic shipbuilders were Messrs. Greenman & Co., who began in 1827 in a small way at "head of Mystic." This firm began with smacks and schooners, then built brigs, barks and clippers for the Southern and California trade—125 vessels in all. The business so increased that by 1852-55 there were five shipyards in operation, and nearly 500 men—calkers, joiners, carpenters, blacksmiths—went down to the yards to work of a morning. Of these firms, besides the Greenmans above mentioned, the most important were Irons & Grinnell, who began operations in 1840, and built in all 620 vessels; Charles Mallory & Co., who began in 1849, and built 52 vessels, and Hill & Grinnell, who succeeded the old firm of Irons & Grinnell on the death of Irons in 1858, and built 16 vessels, including 5 Spanish gunboats.

The type of vessel that gave distinction to Mystic was that known as the "half clipper." The first clippers intended for the California trade were built for speed chiefly. Freights were high and carrying capacity was not so much considered. But in a few years freights fell, and a demand arose for vessels that were both swift and capacious. Mr. M. C. Hill, then foreman for Charles Mallory & Co., originated the model of the half clipper. The old gentleman is still living in Mystic, and gave us some interesting reminiscences of his craft in the days when it made the name of Mystic familiar in uttermost ports.

"The first shipyard here," he began, "was that of Greenman & Co. I well remember when the five shipyards were in operation, with half a score of ships on the stocks, and 500 men busy upon them. The most famous ships? Well, there was the 'Pampero,' the first California clipper, built in Mallory's yard by myself; the 'Andrew Jackson,' built by Irons & Grinnell, and the 'Twilight,' built by the Mallorys after my drawings, were both famous for speed. They left New York for the Golden Gate on the same day and hour, and arrived in San Francisco on the same day and within an hour of one another. The bark

'Aquidneck,' built by myself for Baltimore merchants in the Rio trade, performed a feat never surpassed. She made the trip from Baltimore to Rio in time never equaled by steamer or sailing vessel. I suppose the most notable shipyard in Mystic was that of the Mallorys. D. D. Mallory, the founder, came here from Waterford, Conn., when quite a young man, and began life as a sail-maker. By industry and economy he accumulated capital sufficient to engage in the whaling business, and later embarked in shipbuilding. Besides many Government vessels he built eight of the fifteen gunboats for the Spanish Government which were built in Mystic. There were thirty in all, you remember, in the contract taken by Ericsson, fifteen being built in New York and fifteen here. The war struck the first blow at the prosperity of our shipyards. The depredations of Confederate privateers led shipowners to register under the British flag. Then the age of steam and iron vessels came, and there was little demand for wooden craft such as our yards turned out."

We were not slow in discovering the many delightful drives in the vicinity of Mystic. Chief of these is the drive to Lantern Hill, about six

miles above the village. The road winds along the curves of the estuary for the first three miles, and then leads you up the narrow wooded valley of the Mystic, through meadow intervalles, under frowning crags, until at length you reach the base of the hill. It is a long climb to the top, but when you reach it the view is superb. It is the highest land hereabouts and forms a landmark for vessels coming in from sea. Montauk Light is thirty miles nearer the ocean, and stands upon a considerable bluff, yet sailors approaching Montauk Point sight first this rugged Connecticut hilltop. Of course, from so lofty a position the eye ranges over a wide and varied landscape. Town and village with their church spires are prettily blended with the dark-green foliage of June, and beyond is the Sound with its islands and the dark-blue ocean.

At other times we drive to Fort Hill, about two miles west of the village. On this hill stood the central stronghold of the Pequots, described by Captain Mason in his account of the battle as being two miles from the fort on Pequot Hill, stormed by himself. Here is another magnificent view. Another delightful drive is to Stonington, six miles east; from the summit of the ridges

which lie between, one gets delightful views of land and water. The little local walks are also very delightful. West Mystic bristles all over with stern granite crags, on which and amid which the houses of the village nestle. On one of these, commanding the ship channel, and some forty feet above it, stood Fort Rachel, one of the defenses of Mystic in the war of 1812. A friend who accompanied us thither for a Sunday evening stroll told its story as follows:

“In the war of 1812, as you know, the British paid much more attention to this part of the coast than to any other, several of their larger vessels patrolling our waters almost constantly. On the 12th of June, 1813, an armed cutter of the enemy, with a launch in tow, was seen approaching up the ship channel yonder, with the evident design of plundering and burning the town, as he had several of our coast villages. A masked battery of one twelve-pounder, named Fort Rachel, after a local heroine, had already been thrown up on this rock, which, as you see, commands the ship channel completely. An express hastily summoned the minutemen of the village to the fort, which was unmanned. Twenty men responded. There was powder for the gun, but no ball, but

spikes, scrap iron and pieces of chain were hastily gathered and thrust into the muzzle. The British, quite unsuspecting of danger, were allowed to approach to about where the drawbridge now stands, when the gun was fired at point-blank range, sweeping the cutter's decks. As soon as she could recover from the confusion the cutter manned her launch, and sent a detachment ashore to carry the cliff, which, to appearance, was undefended; but while this was being done, our lads, under Captain Haley, had time to load, and as the launch neared the shore again discharged their weapon with such good judgment that the craft was sent to the bottom, and most of her men were killed or wounded. The British commander then turned and fled. In plundering and burning houses tenanted by defenseless women and children he had been measurably successful, but for contending against spikes and scrap iron he had no stomach. This Haley, with four other Mystic men—Burrows, Park, Washington and Tufts—was the hero of another gallant affair. For two days after Hardy attacked Stonington, the British fleet lay off the Hummocks, and our boys thought they would try a stratagem on them. They manned a large sloop-rigged fishing boat,

loaded her with boxes, barrels and bags, and sailed out past the fleet as if intending to run the blockade. Meantime, one looking through the hill yonder might have seen Capt. Jonathan Wheeler's company of Groton militia concealing themselves amid the rocks of Groton Long Point. The British eagerly pursued the American sloop in the familiar barge used in their predatory excursions. The sloop at first tried to outsail her pursuers, but apparently failing in the attempt, turned and ran in upon Groton Long Point, where the men beached her and fled on shore. The British eagerly pursued them, and when once on land were met by a volley from the militia, which killed several, wounded more, and sent the survivors into the water, where they surrendered. The captured barge was afterwards sold for \$1,200 a part of the proceeds being divided among the captives.

"I must tell you about another exploit in which Captain Burrows figured. One day the Mystic sloop 'Fox,' commanded by Capt. Jesse Crary, was captured, though captain and crew succeeded in escaping to the shore. Crary determined to retake his craft, which was as the apple of his eye. He accordingly bought the sloop 'Hero,'

procured letters of marque from New London, and sent her out in command of Captain Burrows, to retake the 'Fox.' The 'Hero' convoyed a fleet of six vessels as far as Montauk, and soon after sighted the 'Fox,' which ran off with the 'Hero' in hot pursuit. Both craft had been built by Eldridge Packer of Mystic, and were equal in speed, but Burrows knew better how to sail his vessel, and gained on the 'Fox'; indeed, he overhauled her so quickly that he was enabled to run his bowsprit into the enemy's mainsail, and to board her, where, after a gallant fight, he gained her colors. The two vessels received a hearty greeting as they came up to the village, through which the news of the expedition had been quickly spread."

CHAPTER VIII

FISHER'S ISLAND

FROM the masthead of the old whaling barque "Nile," slowly rotting at New London's docks, we saw one day, a long, blue outlined island, eight or ten miles out to sea and acting as the natural breakwater of the harbor. Its corollary on the Long Island coast is Plum Island, and between the two the currents of Long Island Sound rush with the velocity of a mill race. Much of the island is unfenced and uninhabited; and although it has all the elements of a summer resort—pleasant prospects, cool breezes, picturesque walks and drives—it is rarely visited by the tourist. Its history is a notable one, and it derives additional interest from the fact that it has been for more than two centuries the occasion of much wrangling and contention as to jurisdiction between neighboring States.

Captain Adolphus Block first discovered it, sailing up the Sound from Manhattan in his square-

bowed, high-pooed, native-built yacht the "Restless," poking his inquisitive nose into every creek and bay along the coast as far east as Cape Cod, and claiming for his Dutch masters territory that rightfully belonged to the English king, and this in 1614, six years before the "Mayflower" landed. Block named the island Fisher's Island after one of his companions, it is said. It was pretty correctly mapped by De Saet, an early Dutch geographer, who thus speaks of it in his journal:

"A small island lies to the southwest by south from this river (the Thames) as the coast runs. Near the west end of it a northwest by west moon causes very low water."

For twenty-five years after its discovery the island remained a wilderness, known only to the Dutch traders, who resorted thither to purchase peltries and wampum of the Indians. But in 1640 John Winthrop, Jr., son of the famous Governor Winthrop, the founder of Boston, obtained from the Massachusetts plantation a grant of Fisher's Island so far as it was theirs to grant, "reserving the right of Connecticut if it should be decided to be theirs." Nearly at the same time, in order that there might be no flaw in his title, he applied to the Connecticut General Court for a similar

grant, which was given him in the following words, which are copied from the records of a General Court, held at Hartford, April 9, 1641:

“Upon Mr. Winthrop's motion to the court for Fisher's Island, it is the mind of the court that so far as it hinders not the public good of the country, either for fortifying for defence, or setting up a trade for fishing or salt and such like, he shall have liberty to proceed therein.”

But the patent granted to the Duke of York in 1664 contained an insignificant clause that was not only a source of disquiet to Governor Winthrop, but has continued to be a disturber of the peace to the present day. This clause gave to New York all the islands lying in Long Island Sound, and shortly after the patent was granted Winthrop applied to and received from Governor Nicholls of New York a third patent, declaring his island to be an “entire, enfranchised township, manor, and place of itself, in nowise subordinate or belonging unto or dependent upon any riding, township, place or jurisdiction whatever.” Connecticut, however, did not by Winthrop's act relinquish her claim to jurisdiction.

In 1680 Sir Edmund Andros, the petty tyrant who soon afterward made an ignominious exit

from the colonies in chains, wrote to the magistrates of Connecticut, asserting his authority as Governor of New York over Fisher's Island; to this the General Court of May 13, 1680, thus stoutly replied:

“Whereas this court is informed that Sir Edmund Andros hath asserted that a certain island called Fisher's Island, belonging to heirs of John Winthrop, deceased, is part of his Royal Highness's territories, which by charter from his Majesty, Charles II., King of England, is indeed granted unto this, his Majesty's colony of Connecticut, and under the government (thereof). This colony, for preserving the just limits of his Majesty's gracious grant to them, do hereby publicly assert that said island is a part and member of this colony of Connecticut and under the government thereof, and that they have exercised and shall exercise government there as occasion shall require, and do hereby declare and protest against the said Sir Edmund Andros and all other persons their claims or exercise of authority or government on or over said island.”

Here the matter ended for the time being, but on each occasion that the vexed question of the boundaries of the two States came up for settle-

ment the island was always an important factor in the problem. Early in the present year a report was presented to the Legislature of Connecticut by its three commissioners previously appointed to treat with the commissioners of New York on this affair, which recommended the surrender of the island to New York. This report was accepted by the Legislature, but the act created so much dissatisfaction in some parts of the State that it was led to supplement its action by reappointing the commissioners to treat further with those of New York, and to devise some method for its acquisition by Connecticut. And this is the present status of the matter. It cannot but be remarked, however, that in the eastern part of the State the prospect of the cession of the island to New York is viewed with the greatest objection. Connecticut claims it by patent, conquest and purchase, and the general feeling is that the island is lawfully hers. "Why, look at it," said a prominent gentleman conversing on the subject recently; "the island is scarcely three miles off our coast—just far enough to be beyond the reach of riparian law; it was settled by our people; it is bound to us by every tie of interest and kinship; we have considered it ours for more than two

centuries, and now it is given to a foreign State, whose nearest territory is twenty miles away across a stormy channel, and whose nearest county town is thrice and its capital ten times that distance. Connecticut ought to have it, of course she ought, and if she had half the pluck and belligerency of her younger days she would have it, or"—a very expressive bit of pantomime finished the sentence.

There is no way of acquiring the island now, it is said, except by act of Congress, and it is probable that New York, having maintained a death grip on it for more than two centuries, will require a pretty liberal fee before agreeing to the act of cession.

Soon after receiving his patent from Connecticut, in the spring of 1644, Governor Winthrop began his settlement of the island by sending hither several "yeomen," who cleared the forest and put up two or three rude cottages for winter quarters. There is no evidence of Winthrop's presence on the island until the spring of 1645, when he came with a company, and the settlement of the island was actively urged forward. None of the pioneers, however, brought their wives and families with them: these remained behind until the autumn of 1646, or until com-

fortable dwellings had been built for them; but the colonists were not all this time without the refining influence of female society. As early as April, 1645, there is evidence of a lady's presence among them. Roger Williams, writing to Governor Winthrop from "Narragansett, 22, 4, 45," sends his "loving salutes to your dearest and kind sister," and other letters of the Winthrops of this period mention her. This brave lady was Mrs. Lake, sister-in-law to Governor Winthrop. She had been visiting Lady Fenwick at Saybrook, but on Winthrop's arrival on the island went thither in company with Mr. Thomas Peters, a brother of the Rev. Hugh Peters, a Puritan divine, who figures somewhat largely in the early records of the colony. She is worthy of honor as being the first Englishwoman who trod the soil of the Pequot country.

Governor Winthrop remained on the island until the success of the plantation was assured, and then, having received a grant on the banks of the Thames, removed thither and founded the present city of New London.

The piratical annals of the island (if I may be allowed the expression) form a not uninteresting episode in its history. For a period of nearly

fifty years—from 1680, let us say, until 1723, when the “Greyhound,” man-of-war, broke the spirit of the marauders by capturing a pirate crew of twenty-five men, and bringing them into Newport where they were hanged—the shores and islands of the eastern part of the Sound and of the ocean as far east as Cape Cod were havens of refuge for all the pirates who infested the American coasts. Hard pressed, hither they fled for safety. The innumerable islands, bays, creeks and channels of these waters afforded secure hiding-places and their swift currents, shoals, reefs and the dense fogs that are whirled swiftly in from the ocean were additional elements of security.

Every one who has read of Captain Kidd will remember Gardiner’s Island and Bay on the coast of Long Island as his favorite haunt, and Fisher’s Island, directly opposite, was much frequented by himself and others of his ilk. Here, behind its wooded shores, in their low, black schooners they waited until a rich West Indiaman, bound to or from New London, came sailing by, when they pounced upon her, and after rifling her of such parts of her cargo as pleased their fancy, either burned her or allowed her to proceed on her voyage.

Many marvelous tales and legends of these freebooters still linger about the coast, and eerie sights still continue to be seen by the credulous fishermen. In the dead of night ghostly companies land upon the island, seek some secluded dell, and fall to digging with spade and pickax, but in the morning when the fisherman seeks the spot no trace of their labors is seen, and frequently spectral vessels, with low, black hulls, tapering masts, and everything, "as they sailed, as they sailed," under Captain Kidd, are seen flying down the Sound amid the scud and drift of the departing easterly storms. There are persons who sneer at these tales, and even of the existence of the pirates themselves as mere figments of the imagination, and who would rob Captain Kidd of his glory by making him out a mere thievish landsman who was in the habit of putting out from the shore in a whaleboat occasionally and capturing such unfortunate coasters as came in his way. But these gentlemen forget the large mass of documentary evidence against their view of the matter, which if gathered together might make some interesting annals of piracy. It is doubtful if they ever met with the following paper, which I copy from the records of a meeting of the Governor

and Council at Hartford in 1682, and which is the earliest authentic document that I have seen proving the existence of pirates on this coast, although there may be earlier. It is addressed to the above-named body by Daniel Wetherell, of New London:

“NEW LONDON, July 25, 1682.

“Hon’d Sir: Thse may inform your honor that lately arrived at East hampton on Longe Island a Catch and 2 small Sloops with about 30 or 40 privateers or rather pirates; one of the sloops laye some time at Plum Island when 5 of her men left her and came hither, the rest went for the Bay Colonie, and at Nantasket met with more of their companions and gave chase to a sloop of Mr. Isaac Arnold’s yt was bound to Virginia and took her with a thousand pound cargo as he informs me; the Ketch was about 130 tunn which they made sale of at East hampton to one Hutchinson of Bostone, and with part of the money bought another sloop of Capt. Hubbard of the same place; which came over to this harbor pretending to buy some provisions, but bought not any only a little bread. I doe suppose they intend to supply themselves by piracy. The next day after they were

gone I received the enclosed, which gives account of the third small sloop by the Governor of Rhode Island, since which here arrived Mr. Jonas Clarke bound to Southold to put Mr. Arnold ashore there, and from thence to Connecticut, who was chased by that privateer that went out of this harbor and lyes still about Fisher's Iland and Gardiner's Iland; but they were too nimble for ye privateers and came into this harbor where they desired some men and arms to secure them, having as they said a very considerable cargo on board. . . . Sir, my humble desire is that your Honor with your Honored Councell would please to inform me what to do in these exigincys for they are yet waiting for to take all they can master, being well armed and fitted with granadas for the work. I earnestly beg your Hon'rs advice in this weighty concern wherein men's lives and estates are daily in hazard, and shall wait for an answer from your Hon'r and Councell. Meanwhile shall rest your Hon'rs humble servant to be commanded.

“DANIEL WETHERELL.

“A Catch of Mr. Raymand's coming from Virginia was spoken with off Block Island eight days

since; is not yet arrived; we fear she is taken by some of these Rogues."

Lying in the path of all the commerce of the Sound, Fisher's Island is the dread of mariners; its swift currents, shoals and bars, sunken reefs and cruel ledges of rock, combine to render it the Sable Island of the Sound. Race Point, on the western end of the island, and Race Rock, a short distance southwest, marked by a spindle, have been most prolific of shipwrecks.

A list of the disasters that have occurred here would form a long chapter of accidents. The English ship "John and Lucy," lost here in 1671, and the bark "Providence," lost November 28th, 1679, were the earliest victims. The first vessel sent out from New London on a whaling voyage was lost here January 13, 1735, and in 1775 a ship sent in by Captain Biddle as a prize met here the same fate. But the most notable wreck, and one no doubt vividly remembered by many readers, was that of the steamboat "Atlantic," which went ashore on the rocks a little east of Race Point on the night of the 27th of November, 1846. The "Atlantic" was one of a line of steamboats plying between Norwich and New York. On the

27th of November she was on her passage to New York, and had just passed the mouth of New London Harbor, when she was disabled by the breaking of a part of her machinery. A heavy sea was running at the time, and the swift currents carried her upon the rocks of Fisher's Island and pounded her to pieces in a short time. Forty-two persons perished in this catastrophe. The disaster occasioned as much horror and excitement in the public mind as the more recent burning of the "Narragansett." New London soon afterward raised a stately monument of granite to the memory of the lost (more particularly to the Walton family, father, mother and three children, all of whom perished in the wreck, though their bodies were recovered), and Mrs. Sigourney, who was then living in Norwich, and some of whose friends were among the lost, further commemorated the event by her beautiful dirge, "The Bell of the Wreck"—familiar to all schoolboys from its popularity with the compilers of school readers. The Government has since erected a lighthouse on one of the hummocks or islets of the Sound near the scene of the disaster.

CHAPTER IX

THE FROGS OF WINDHAM

IT is difficult for one who lingers in summer days on the beautiful village green of Windham, where evidences of wealth, comfort and plenty confront him on every side, to bring back the scenes and conditions of that far-off year, 1754, which made possible the curious incident we are about to describe.

It was the night of June 17, 1754, that the grewsome, grotesque circumstance occurred. The green was as fresh and vivid in coloring, the elms arched as gracefully, the stream from the pond broke over its barriers and flowed away under the rustic bridge as murmuringly then as now, but in the minds of the people there was sad foreboding and expectation of the momentary outbreak of a savage foe. It was the eve of one of the bloodiest of the French and Indian wars. Windham County had special reason for fearing vengeance, since, in acquiring some parts of her recent Sus-

quehanna purchase, the Indians were known to have been aggrieved and wronged. Goodman White's negro slave Pomp was the first to experience the terrors of the night. Having lingered until a late hour beside a dusky Phyllis in one of the outlying farmhouses, he at length started to return to the village, a Voodoo charm about his neck and a horseshoe in his hand as a protection against spooks. The night was still, misty, and intensely dark. Pomp went his way whistling, his fears equally divided between the insubstantial ghost and the more material Mohawk. He had reached the green, when all at once a dire uproar burst upon him. Roar, bellow, gabble, shriek, splash, gurgle, were combined, and the sounds came from everywhere at once—above, below, on this side and that, from field, and pond, and forest. To say that Pomp fled, and shrieked, and prayed, conveys no idea of the celerity of his flight nor the intensity of his groans and supplications. But before he could reach the center of the green, chamber windows were thrown open, nightcapped heads were thrust forth, and feminine shrieks and the strong cries of men added to the uproar; many swooned; the stronger fled as they were to the village green, where they

huddled in a little group, every eye upturned to see through the murky gloom the glory of the opening heavens and the awful visage of the descending Judge. In that company not one but believed that the last great day was at hand. But the levin-stroke of judgment failed to come, and soon the thought came to the stronger minds that the uproar was of terrestrial origin, and attributable to savage foes. Peering into the darkness, and shrinking from the possible deadly tomahawk, they waited and watched. At length they heard, amid the general babel, distinct articulations which gradually resolved themselves into the names of two of Windham's most prominent citizens—Colonel Dyer, the agent, and Squire Elderkin, one of the trustees of the Susquehanna Company. "We'll have Colonel Dyer! We'll have Colonel Dyer! We'll have Colonel Dyer!" the mysterious voices declared; and "Elderkin too!" "Elderkin too!" "Elderkin too!" an equally mysterious chorus repeated; not a person but trembled for the fate of those two strong pillars of the commonwealth. The words "tete," "tete," which followed, were construed as meaning that the investing force was disposed to treat, but as nothing could be done in the darkness, the af-

frighted people contented themselves with placing a line of sentries around the town, and then withdrew to their homes.

So in fear, doubt, distress, speculation, the fateful night wore away. Morning broke, and never, it is safe to say, was light welcomed with more hearty accord than by the good people of Windham.

Hours passed but no savage army appeared, nor was any cause of the strange voices of the night discoverable, and the occurrence would, no doubt, have been added to the long list of supernatural events detailed in Cotton Mather's Wonder Book had not Pomp, watering his master's horses at the pond next morning, discovered multitudes of frogs lying dead and blackened in the water. Then it came as a revelation to the people of Windham that an army of frogs, smitten with some deadly epidemic, or, perhaps, attacked by some invading army, had produced the affrighting sounds. The revulsion of feeling, it is said, was great; the whole village assumed a sheepish air. Somehow, too, the story got abroad, and brought a ripple of laughter to the face of the whole county. Everybody was disposed to regard the experience of that terrible night as a rich joke. Gibes, puns,

lampoons, ditties, proverbs, were rained on the unfortunate Windhamites. Even the clergymen poked fun, as the following letter from the Rev. Mr. Stiles of Woodstock, to his nephew, a law student, abundantly shows. It is dated at Woodstock, July 9, 1754, and proceeds:

"If the late tragical tidings from Windham deserve credit, as doubtless they do, it will then concern the gentlemen of your Jurispridian order to be fortified against the croaks of Tauranean legions—legions terrible as the very wreck of matter and the crash of worlds. Antiquity relates that the elephant fears the mouse: a herd trembles at the crowing of a cock; but pray whence is it that the croaking of a bullfrog should so Belthazarize a lawyer? How Dyerful the alarm made by these audacious long-winded croakers. I hope, sir, from the Dyerful reports from the frog pond you will gain some instruction, as well as from the reports of my Lord Coke."

CHAPTER X

LEBANON, THE HOME OF JONATHAN TRUMBULL

THIS old town well illustrates the historical importance of the average rural New England village, once, maybe, the theater of inspiring events, but which the shifting currents of trade have left far inland, as it were, to retain and treasure up what it has received. The atmosphere of the town is as dreamy as that of the Lotos Isles. The ashes of the past here rest undisturbed. Rusty flintlock and dented sword blade, quaint old china, letters of famous men breathing faintly of lavender and camphor, scented garments of another age, rest secure from the collector's rage and the golden shekels of the dealer in antiques. One is surprised to find what stores of history are locked up in the town. It was, as remarked, the birth-place and home of Jonathan Trumbull, the "war Governor" of Connecticut. His "war office," the true base of supplies for the Continental armies, stood here. William Williams, signer of

the Declaration of Independence, lived in a corner house on the village street. The Duke de Lauzun's legion of the French army went into winter quarters here in 1779, and pretty much all the famous men of the Revolution, at one time and another, have threaded its streets. Never was a people more steeped in tradition and historic lore than the villagers. They imbibe it with their native air and impart it as freely as it is received.

Governor Trumbull, is of course, the chief figure in the village gossip. He was Governor of Connecticut from 1770 to 1784, and held his court in the village. He was a Judge before he was Governor, Senator and Deputy before he was Judge, and a merchant before he was either. To give his mercantile career in detail would be to open up all the methods and channels of colonial commerce. He had a store and warehouse at Haddam, on the Connecticut, another at Norwich, and ships on every sea where the jealous policy of England allowed the colonies an entrance. His most extensive trade was with the West Indies. Connecticut was then purely agricultural, and the fields and forests of Windham county produced cattle, horses, sheep, grain, salted provisions and the like in great abundance, all of which found a

ready sale on the plantation. These Trumbull collected and sent in great wagon-trains to Had-dam or Norwich, whence his swift ships bore them to the Indies, receiving in return sugar, molasses, salt, rum, cotton, wool and other commodities. He had also several ships trading to London, and sent hither in addition to the crude products of the soil, furs, skins, whale-oil, whale fins, flax, hemp, potash, tar, turpentine, fish, cider and perry. The articles that he received in return were intended chiefly for the use of his fair country-women; many of their descendants of the present day I imagine would be puzzled to determine the nature and use of these articles from a mere mention of them. Here is a list taken from one of his invoices of about 1742: "Scarlet cloaks, scarlet caps, scarlet calimancoes, black leather and morocco clogs, drugget, rich black serges, rich black-spotted grogatoons, broad knee-gartering, calicoes, muslins, cambrics, canvas, kerseys, lincens, duffels, grograms, hose, silk gloves, crape, satin, lace, thread, galloons, sorted velvet masks, lawns, checks, ribbons, fans and taffetas, colored Brussels camlets, women's stuffed shoes, flowered silk shoes and clogs, and glasses in walnut, shell, mahogany and japanned frames."

By 1763 our merchant had become rich. He owned a fine old roomy mansion on the village main street, a store, gristmill, and several farms in Lebanon, wharves and warehouses at Haddam and Norwich, and argosies enough upon the seas to swell the inventory of his estate to £18,000. It is a striking instance of the simplicity of the times as well as of his own powers of body and mind that to the busy career of the merchant he added the cares of such public offices as Senator of the colony and Judge of the Superior Court, besides serving on several commissions of grave importance. But still more arduous services were in store for him. In 1769 the unanimous voice of the freedmen made him Governor of the sturdy little colony, and he was still Governor when on that April morning in 1775 Trail Bissel, spurring down from Watertown, roused every country hamlet with his news of Lexington. Never was busier man than Trumbull for the next few weeks. The gossips give a graphic picture of him at this time. From morning till night he was at his store, now turned into a supplies depot; hat, coat and vest off, gray hair floating in the breeze, dealing out tents and rations to the militia that came pouring in, packing great wagons with clothing, provisions

and powder, for the newly-formed camps at Boston, reading and answering dispatches brought by breathless messengers from captains of trainbands and selectmen of the various towns, while every now and then a village trainband or militia company would march in with fanfare of drum and fife, salute him and be dismissed to the seat of war with well-chosen words of encouragement. From this time on until the close of the struggle the little store became the theater of the intensest military activity. It is as historic in its way as Faneuil Hall or the State House at Philadelphia.

Nearly all the 719 meetings of the Connecticut Governor and Council during the war were held here. Here Washington, Adams, Hancock, Jefferson, Putnam, Greene, Rochambeau and others met at different times to consult on the affairs of the country. Here was conceived and perfected that admirable system of espionage and detection which preserved Connecticut from the horrors of civil war. It was the birthplace, too, of those audacious privateers, the "Spy," the "Cromwell," the "Trumbull," and others, that scoured the Sound and discovered such an affinity for the fat storeships of the enemy; and from its doors those long supply trains and droves of fat

beeves, guided by Colonel Champion, of happy memory, set out for Valley Forge and Morristown. This historic building was a little one-story structure, with an old-fashioned hipped roof and central chimney stack, and divided within into two apartments—one filled with the miscellaneous articles of a country store and an inner apartment used as a counting room. It is still standing, though removed from its ancient site and fitted up for a tenement.

But this is drifting into serious history when the main object was to present some of the gossip anecdotes that are so marked a feature of the village life. Two or three that follow are only for purposes of illustration. One day, in the December of 1780, Lauzun's Legion of Hussars came riding into the town. They were a splendid body of men, every one above the regulation standard of six feet, and all mounted on horses gayly caparisoned. The officers were young "nobles" of France, and resplendent in the blue and gold of the French uniform. At their head rode the Duke de Lauzun, his breast sparkling with orders, in appearance worthy to be the leader of such a legion. Rochambeau had designated Lebanon as their winter quarters, and they were soon

in camp—the men in barracks on the village green, the officers in the homes of the villagers, and Lauzun in the house of Colonel David Trumbull, the Governor's son, which stood directly opposite the gubernatorial residence. They remained in the village seven months. Once during the winter the dull routine of the camp was broken by the news that General Washington was close at hand. He was then on his way to Newport to meet Rochambeau, and came to Lebanon as the guest of the Governor. Lauzun ordered a grand review of the legion in his honor, on which occasion the Hussars displayed the perfection of military discipline. They charged, wheeled and deployed, broke ranks and reformed, waved their colors, bared their sabers, and fired their carbines amid torrents of applause from the multitudes that gathered to witness the grand affair. The reviewing party made a pretty bit of color. There were Washington and his escort in full uniform—blue, buff-lined coats, buff vests, buff breeches buckled at the knees, and long spurred boots; Lauzun and his staff in blue and gold, epauleted, their breasts glittering with jeweled insignia; and Governor Trumbull and his suite in the crimson, broad-flapped coats, embroidered vests, and vel-

vet small-clothes that formed the dress of the civilian of that period. It was a grand affair, and its memory will never fade from the village. The presence of the mercurial Frenchmen gave to the town this winter the gayety of a provincial capital. The young nobles were not slow in discovering the attractions of the "fair Connecticut girls" (as one of their number styled them in a letter which I should like to print entire if space permitted). Sleigh rides, dancing parties, tea parties, and dinner entertainments kept the village in a whirl of excitement the winter through. Once the officers rode down to Norwich to a grand dinner at General Jedediah Huntington's, and won the hearts of all the village maidens by their splendid uniforms and superb bearing. Governor Trumbull and the neighboring gentry and the Duke gave many entertainments. One of the grandest of these was a dinner given by the Duke in honor of two distinguished officers of the French army—the Marquis de Chastellux and the Baron de Montesquieu—the latter a grandson of the famous sage of Brede. Governor Trumbull was, of course, invited. When the guests were all seated at table—most of them being gay, skeptical French officers—the Governor arose and

pronounced a long and formal grace to the no little astonishment of his fellow guests. It was the Puritan custom, and the good old methodical chief magistrate could not depart from it. The incident produced such an impression on De Chastellux that he recorded it in his volume of travels.

It was not all merrymaking, however. In the depth of winter news came that the army was suffering terribly, especially for clothing, and so the good Governor, as he had done before, ordered that contributions for their relief should be taken on Sunday in the various churches. On the day appointed the little village church at Lebanon was crowded, and in their stiff, straight backed pew sat the Governor and Madam Trumbull—the latter wearing a beautiful scarlet cloak, the gift, it is said, of Rochambeau himself. The Governor's call was read, and in the hush that followed Madam Trumbull arose, proceeded to the altar, and laid on it the scarlet cloak as her contribution to the cause. Such an example could not but be contagious. Rings, brooches, chains, purses, and cloaks from the women, greatcoats, caps, mittens, stockings, boots, money and provisions from the men were rained upon the altar, and the poor soldiers reaped a rich harvest from the generous act.

CHAPTER XI

MOUNT TOM, A HAUNTED HILL

IT is not long since the public was kept for weeks on the rack of expectation by a mountain in the Carolinas, yclept Bald Mountain, which after hundreds of years of unbroken serenity suddenly assumed a disturbed aspect. Deep in its bowels unearthly moanings and mutterings were heard. Great bowlders were seen to start and roll from summit to base without apparent cause; fissures in its sides, and tremors and shakings in the surrounding country, seemed to imply the presence of volcanic force, and the tidings flashed over the wires that the country was about to acquire a promising volcano excited the liveliest expectations in every patriotic breast. Eager gentlemen of the press at once rushed to the mountain that the public might be presented with its every succeeding phase, as well as with a vivid description of the final catastrophe. A railroad thither was projected, and contracts entered into

for building inns and boarding houses to accommodate prospective sightseers. So far, however, the mountain has disappointed expectations, and if the scientific men are correct, will continue to do so.

But a stranger fact is that, all unknown to the public, there is in Connecticut, scarcely three hours by rail from New York, a mountain that far surpasses its Carolinian rival in all that makes the latter famous. This mountain is known as Mount Tom, and is in the township of East Haddam, on the Connecticut River, about sixteen miles above Saybrook Point, and not more than half that distance from the city of Middletown; it is easily accessible from Saybrook, Middletown and Hartford by the Valley Railroad and also by the steamboats that ply on the Connecticut River. By the railroad one stops at Tylerville, where a primitive scow propelled by a two-man power ferries one across the river to Goodspeed's. The steamboats stop at both Goodspeed's and East Haddam landings.

The mountain itself rises about two and one-half miles north of the village of East Haddam, and is in shape something like an elongated sugar loaf; there are outcroppings of the granitic for-

mation peculiar to this region, on its surface, and it is covered with a small growth of chestnut, oak and maple, whose dark green foliage, when I visited it, was beginning to give place to the russet, crimson and gold of early autumn. The Salmon and the Moodus Rivers flow together at its western base, first compassing the mountain on two sides; the average rise and fall of the tide here is two feet. At the base of the mountain, on one side, is the pretty factory village of Moodus, vocal with the hum of ten thousand spindles; on the other is a cove and dock, whence a little steamboat accomplishes weekly trips to New York; north and east stretches a cultivated country with many a village and hamlet snugly nestled in its bosom.

Having visited the mountain I became interested in its history. Its Indian name was Mackimoodus, signifying "the place of noises," and the tribe of Indians who inhabited the region about it bore the same appellation. They were remarkable for their piety, and sustained the relation of priests to the other Indians, to whom this mountain with its thunderings and quakings could be no other than the abode of Hobbamocko, the author of all human calamities, who was to

be propitiated. Hence Pequot, Mohegan and Narragansett resorted thither with offerings, and the powwows of the Mackimoodus were kept offering almost daily sacrifices to the spirit of the mountain.

The first whites came here in 1670, and from this time minute accounts of the phenomena may be gleaned from the early writers. A long and detailed account is given in the manuscript of the Rev. Charles Bradley, for many years pastor of the church at East Haddam, which is preserved in the library of the Connecticut Historical Society at Hartford. The Rev. Mr. Hosmer, the first minister at Haddam, in a letter to Mr. Prince of Boston, dated August 13, 1729, thus speaks of the mountain:

“As to the earthquakes I have something considerable and awful to tell you. Earthquakes have been here (and nowhere but in this precinct as can be discerned; that is, they seem to have their center, rise and origin among us), as has been observed, for more than thirty years. I have been informed that in this place, before the English settlement, there were great numbers of Indian inhabitants, and that it was a place of extraordinary Indian Pawaws, or, in short, that

it was a place where the Indians drove a prodigious trade at worshipping the devil. . . . Now whether there be anything diabolical in these things I know not; but this I know, that God Almighty is to be seen and trembled at, in what has been often heard among us. Whether it be fire or air distressed in the subterranean caverns of the earth cannot be known; for there is no eruption, no explosion perceptible, but by sounds and tremors which sometimes are very fearful and dreadful. I have myself heard eight or ten sounds successively, and imitating small arms, in the space of five minutes. I have, I suppose, heard several hundreds of them within twenty years, some more, some less terrible. Sometimes we have heard them almost every day, and great numbers of them in the space of a year. Oftentimes I have observed them to be coming down from the north imitating slow thunder, until the sound came near or right under, and then there seemed to be a breaking, like the noise of a cannon shot, or severe thunder, which shakes the houses and all that is in them; they have in a manner ceased since the great earthquake. As I remember, there have been but two heard since that time and both but moderate."

The venerable Doctor Trumbull, the Cotton Mather of Connecticut, in his search for its antiquities, gathered much concerning the Moodus noises, and printed it in his delightful chronicles of the State, now I believe entirely out of print; he publishes the letter given above and also the following account from a resident of Haddam:

“The awful noises continue to the present time. The effects they produced are various as the intermediate degrees between the roar of a cannon and the noise of a pistol. The concussions of the earth made at the same time are as much diversified as the sounds in the air. The shocks they give to a dwelling house are the same as the falling of logs on the floor. The small shocks produce no emotions of terror or fear in the minds of the inhabitants. They are spoken of as usual occurrences, and are called Moodus noises. But when they are so violent as to be felt in the adjacent towns they are called earthquakes. During my residence here, which has been almost thirty-six years, I have invariably observed after some of the most violent of these shocks that an account has been published in the newspapers of a small shock of an earthquake at New London and Hartford. Nor do I believe in all that period

there has been any account published of an earthquake in Connecticut which was not far more violent here than in any other place. By recurring to the newspapers you will find that an earthquake was noticed on the 18th of May, 1791, about 10 o'clock P. M. It was perceived as far distant as Boston and New York. A few minutes after there was another shock which was perceptible at the distance of seventy miles. Here at that time the concussion of the earth and the roaring of the atmosphere were most tremendous; consternation and dread filled every house. Many chimneys were untopped, and walls thrown down. It was a night much to be remembered, for beside the two shocks which were noticed at a distance, during the night, there was here a succession of shocks to the number of twenty, perhaps thirty, the effects of which, like all others, decreased in every direction in proportion to the distances. The next day stones of several tons weight were found removed from their places, and apertures in the earth, and fissures in immovable rocks, ascertained the places where the explosions were made. Since that time the noises and shocks have been less frequent than before, though not a year passes but some of them are perceptible."

Mr. Barber in his "Historical Collections" says:

"The severest shocks are felt as far northeasterly as Boston, and as far southwesterly as New York, and there noticed as earthquakes. In 1816 and 1817 in the night these noises were more than usually violent. A person was on Mount Tom about fifteen years since, at the time these noises were heard. It appeared to this person as though a stone or large body fell underneath the ground directly under his feet, and grated down to a considerable distance in the depths below. The cause of these noises is explained by some to be mineral or chemical combinations exploding at a depth of many thousand feet beneath the surface of the earth. The jar is similar to that of exploded gunpowder."

And the "Connecticut Gazette" of August 20, 1790:

"Various have been the conjectures concerning the cause of these earthquakes, or Moodus noises as they are called. The following account has gained credit with many persons: It is reported that between twenty and thirty years ago a transient person came to this town who called himself Doctor Steel, from Great Britain, who having had

information respecting these noises made critical observation at different times and in different places, till at length he dug up two pearls of great value which he called carbuncles, near Salmon River, and that he told the people the noises would be discontinued for many years, as he had taken away their cause; but as he had discovered others in miniature, they would be again heard in process of time. The best evidence of the authenticity of this story is that it has happened agreeably to his prophecy. The noises did cease for many years, and have again been heard for two or three years past, and they increase. Three shocks have been felt in a short space, one of which, according to a late paper, was felt at New London, though it was by the account much more considerable in this and the adjacent towns."

An aged inhabitant of Haddam, in answer to my inquiry concerning the origin of the noises, related this legend, and I have given it as a valuable addition to our stock of "folklore." He added that Mount Tom—which is the center from which these noises proceed—had been quiet for a series of years. The last violent outbreak he had himself heard. It occurred one Sunday evening in 1852, when the villagers had gathered for wor-

ship, and I judge from his description was of the same general character as those above described.

From the foregoing account it appears that different persons have entertained different theories respecting the origin of these remarkable natural phenomena. The simple Indians and the early colonists ascribed it to the agency of evil spirits; others attributed it to the explosive power of subterranean gases; the scientific theory would probably differ from all these; and, curious to know what it might be, I addressed a note to Professor Rice, of Wesleyan University, who is familiar with the mountain, expressing my desire, and received from him the following reply:

“I have never made any special investigation of the geology of Moodus. In general the rocks of that vicinity are of the micaceous metamorphic series. They would be called granite in the loose sense in which that word is colloquially used. More strictly they are gneiss and mica schist. There are no volcanic rocks in the vicinity. The noises are simply small earthquakes, such as are frequent in many regions of greatly disturbed metamorphic strata, as for instance in the Alps and Pyrenees. On page 350 of the abridged edition of Charles Kingsley’s memoir is an account,

in his inimitably picturesque style, of one of these little earthquakes which he experienced at Pau in the Pyrenees. In regions of highly disturbed metamorphic strata the rocks are apt to be in a state of strain or tension, which will from time to time produce such slight vibratory movements as are heard and felt in the Moodus noises. The comprehensive cause, both of these and of the severer earthquakes, is the contraction of a cooling globe."

CHAPTER XII

A REVOLUTIONARY NEWGATE*

IN East Granby, sixteen miles northwest of Hartford, on a bleak, barren hillside, plentifully sprinkled with half corroded fragments of copper ore, there stands a mass of ancient, grim-looking buildings, which, frowning from behind a massive wall of stone, and displaying bastion, moat and watch tower, resemble somewhat the deserted castles that confront the traveler on every hilltop as he journeys up or down the Rhine. The moat is nearly filled now, and the wall might be scaled by an active climber, but the visitor who declines this exertion by following the wall around to the east, comes presently to a gateway, through which he may enter unchallenged by warden or sentry, when he will find himself in the yard of what was once the most terrible of modern prisons,—from 1775 to 1783 the national prison of the Continental Government, and from 1790 to

* "Lippincott's Magazine," March, 1881.

1827 the State prison of Connecticut. The utmost desolation now reigns in the inclosure. The owl rests undisturbed on the coping of the wall. The dust and mold of half a century have collected in the unused interiors of workshop and chapel. Bats cling in the dark corners, and the wary spider weaves his meshes and inveigles the silly fly, undisturbed by the housewife's broom or other signs of human occupancy.

The buildings above ground, which first attract the attention, are the former workshops, hospital, chapel and guardhouse of the prison. The dungeons and cells—the prison proper—were one hundred feet beneath the ground; and it was this feature that gave to the old Newgate its unique and horrible character and made it the terror of evildoers wherever its ominous fame was sounded. The entrance to these dungeons is by a perpendicular shaft fifty feet deep, whose yawning mouth is still covered by the guardhouse standing in the center of the prison yard. To one of its sides is affixed a wooden ladder down which the visitor must climb to reach the dungeons below. At the bottom of the shaft a flight of stone steps leads down thirty or forty feet farther to a central chamber, which contained the sleeping apartments of

the convicts. On one side a narrow passage leads down to a well of pure water, above which an air shaft pierces the sandstone for seventy feet until it reaches the surface and admits a few cheering rays of light into the dungeon. Everywhere else a cimmerian darkness prevails. These caverns may be briefly described as comprising three parallel galleries in the heart of the mountain, extending eight hundred feet north and south, and connected by numberless cross-passages cut to facilitate communication, while lateral galleries honeycomb the mountain on either side. The lowest depth reached is three hundred feet. The galleries are cut through the solid rock, and are low and narrow, except in the case of the chamber above mentioned. Their floors are covered with a soft adhesive slime, and in some places with water, which drips unceasingly from the roof, and the intense darkness and noxious gases which prevail render their passage difficult, though not impossible. Besides the main shaft there are other means of exit from the dungeons,—two air shafts, both of which open in the prison yard, and a level or drain leading from the northeast gallery and having its outlet without the prison wall.

The cavern was originally a copper mine, and

owed its existence to the discovery here, about 1705, of a vein of copper ore, so rich that Professor Silliman, after careful assay, found it to yield fifteen per cent of pure copper, the yield of the Cornish mines being but eight per cent. It is a truism in mining lore, I believe, that all the minerals known to man may be found in Connecticut in just sufficient quantities not to pay for working: but at the beginning of the eighteenth century this truth had not been discovered, and the entire range of sandstone hills which stretch from the prison to East Rock, near New Haven, fifty miles distant, is seamed with shallow holes dug by the prospectors of that age. One day these investigators discovered this rich vein of copper ore, and, as gold was believed to be not far distant, a company to work it was quickly formed. To give the history of the mining operations which hollowed out the dungeons of Newgate is not germane to our subject; it is, perhaps, sufficient to say that after being worked for seventy years by free labor, slave labor, and the imported article, the enterprise was abandoned, having bankrupted a score of chartered companies and reduced as many once affluent families to the bitterest poverty. This was in 1773. At that time,

as it happened, the colony of Connecticut was feeling the need of greater prison accommodations than it then possessed. The county jails, its only penal institutions, were overcrowded with prisoners, and were, besides, extremely insecure. It lacked the means to build a general or State's prison, even if the necessary authority could be obtained. In this dilemma some bright spirits suggested employing the abandoned copper mine at Simsbury (now East Granby) as a convict hold, — a suggestion received with great favor by the people and adopted by the Legislature of 1773. This body passed an act directing that male prisoners not under sentence for capital crimes should be imprisoned in the mines, and appropriated a small sum for the purchase and for making the place secure; it also appointed a keeper, one Captain John Viets, and named the new prison Newgate, after the famous prison of that name in London. Another act prescribed the terms of imprisonment. Burglary, robbery and counterfeiting were punished, the first offense by imprisonment not exceeding ten years, the second offense by imprisonment for life. The punishment which might be inflicted on the convicts was moderate whipping, not exceeding ten stripes, and

the putting shackles and fetters upon them; the keeper was also instructed to employ them at labor in the mines, but this was not practised long, as the convicts soon found that the pick-ax and shovel used in mining could be advantageously employed in digging a way out. John Hinson was the first prisoner formally committed to Newgate; his commitment bore date December 2, 1773. Before entering the dungeons he had been so fortunate as to gain the affections of a strong-handed Phyllis serving on one of the neighboring farms, and she, on the eighteenth night of his confinement effected his release by drawing him up through one of the shafts in a bucket that had been used for hoisting ore. Captain Viets then guarded an empty prison until the 26th of the succeeding February, when three prisoners were received; of these, one escaped on the 9th of the following April, and the two others on the 23d. A prisoner committed April 5th escaped on the 9th, having been confined four days. All were released by accomplices outside, who drew them up through the unguarded air shafts,—a fact which led the Legislature to order a more thorough fortification of these approaches.

But events were hastening which were destined

to bring about a new order of things and fill Newgate with a far different class of prisoners. The year 1775 found the colonies engaged in their memorable contest with the mother country. At the outset the patriots found themselves hampered and their cause endangered by the adherents of the British crown among them, men who had been their friends as well as neighbors, but who now became their bitterest foes, assailing them with the rankest epithets, denouncing their measures, spying into their actions and transmitting swift intelligence thereof to the British general, plotting to bring down on them the enemy's armed hordes, and, when they came, piloting them through the country. The patriot leaders, bold, resolute, blessed with abundant nerve-force and an utter absence of sickly sentimentality, took prompt measures to repress these traitors. In most of the colonies committees of safety were at once appointed, charged with a strict espionage of all suspected persons. When sufficient cause appeared, such people were visited and an avowal of their sentiments demanded. If only indifferent, the espionage was continued, but if they openly avowed Tory sentiments they were forthwith apprehended, tried for misdemeanor, and

sent to prison. It was important that such prisoners should be securely confined. The county jails were quite the reverse of secure, and so the stern logic of necessity consigned them to the gloomy dungeons of Newgate. It is interesting to note that the first commitment of prisoners of this class was made by General Washington. His letter of commitment, addressed to the committee of safety at Simsbury, is worthy of insertion as a literary curiosity:

“CAMBRIDGE, Dec. 7, 1775.

“GENTLEMEN,—The prisoners which will be delivered you with this, having been tried by a court-martial and deemed to be such flagrant and atrocious villians that they cannot by any means be set at large or confined in any place near this camp, were sentenced to Simsbury, in Connecticut. You will, therefore, be pleased to have them secured in your jail, or in such other manner as to you shall seem necessary, so that they cannot possibly make their escape. The charges of their imprisonment will be at the Continental expense.

“I am, etc.,

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

During the eight years of war that followed,

Newgate became widely celebrated. Its name frequently appeared in the public prints, and tales of the horrors of its dungeons and of the sufferings of its prisoners were freely narrated at cottage firesides and industriously circulated by the Tories and their friends.

In 1781, one Ebenezer Hathaway had gained considerable notoriety as captain of a Tory privateer boat named the "Adventure." With this boat and his crew of eight men he would steal out from his rendezvous on the Long Island coast, make a descent on some defenseless town in Connecticut, plunder and burn at pleasure, and then return at leisure to his place of retreat. Of course reprisals were made by the other party, and thus originated the famous "whaleboat warfare," waged with so much animosity by the patriots of Connecticut and the Tories of Long Island. In one of these reprisals Hathaway and his crew were taken and committed to Hartford jail for trial. A Tory newspaper furnishes the sequel: "After being tried before the Superior Court, they were ordered to Newgate Gaol, or rather to that inquisition, Simsbury Mines, which, from the following description, exceeds anything among their allies in France or Spain :

"These poor unfortunate victims relate that they were taken from Hartford Gaol and marched under a strong guard to Simsbury Mines, distant about seventy-four miles. In approaching this horrid dungeon they were first conducted through the apartments of the guards, and then through a trapdoor downstairs into another upon the same floor with the kitchen, which was divided from it by a very strong partition door.

"In the corner of this outer room and near the foot of the stairs opened another large trapdoor, covered with bars and bolts of iron, which was hoisted up by two guards by means of a tackle, whilst the hinges grated as they turned upon their hooks, and opened the jaws and mouth of what they call Hell, into which they descended by means of a ladder about six feet more, which led to a large iron grate or hatchway locked down over a shaft of about three feet diameter, sunk through the solid rock, and which they were told led to the bottomless pit. Finding it not possible to evade this hard, cruel fate, they bade adieu to the world, and descended the ladder about thirty-eight feet more, when they came to what is called the landing; then marching shelf by shelf, till, descending about thirty or forty feet more, they

came to a platform of boards laid underfoot, with a few more put overhead to carry off the water, which keeps continually dropping. 'Here,' say they, 'we found the inhabitants of this woful mansion, who were exceeding anxious to know what was going on above.'"

The year previous, a band of Tory marauders from Long Island bent on a predatory excursion had landed near New Haven and marched to Bethany, a town ten miles northwest,—their objective point being the house of Captain Ebenezer Dayton, a gentleman formerly residing on Long Island, but whose Whig sentiments had forced him to fly from the wrath of the Loyalists. This house they broke open and pillaged from top to bottom, the master being absent, and then returned to their boats; but before they could reach the British lines they were captured by two whale-boat crews from Derby, and brought back to Connecticut for trial. Graham, the leader, proved to be a deserter from the Continental Army, and was shot; the others were sentenced to Newgate. Not all the prisoners in these dungeons at this time, however, were of this character. There were men of learning, wit and talent among them,—physicians, lawyers, and one clergyman, the

Rev. Simeon Baxter, who for his "exceedingly bitter and seditious" language against the Congress was sentenced to Newgate. It was his custom every Sabbath to preach to his fellow-spirits in prison, and as he possessed a certain rude eloquence, and some logic, and so constructed his discourses as to prove to his audience that all their persecutors "would swing before John Hancock should be king," he was listened to with the greatest attention and respect. One of these sermons was published in London shortly after his release. It is entitled "Tyrannicide proved lawful from the Practice and Writings of Jews, Heathens, and Christians. A Discourse delivered in the Mines at Symsbury, in the Colony of Connecticut, to the Loyalists confined by Order of the Congress, on September 19, 1781, by Simeon Baxter, a Licentiate in Divinity and Voluntary Chaplain to those Prisoners in the Apartment called Orcus."

Among prisoners of this character, strong, ingenious, desperate, and believing themselves unjustly imprisoned, the hope of escape was fondly cherished, and the attempt eagerly made whenever opportunity offered. Next to the air shafts, the level or drain leading from the northeast gal-

lery was the most common means of escape. The first to make use of this narrow road to freedom was Henry Wooster, one of those engaged in the pillaging of Dayton's house. The entrance to the drain had been closed by a solid wall of masonry, in which, however, a grated aperture was left for the passage of the water. Arming himself with a nail rod taken while at his duties in the nail shop, Wooster attacked the masonry, and picked it out bit by bit until the iron bars could be wrenched from their position. He then entered the level, and, lying at length within its slimy confines, worked himself along, enlarging the passage with his nail rod in places where it did not afford room for his shoulders. Toiling in this way for several weeks, he had nearly gained the outlet when he found one morning, as he was returning feet foremost, that a large stone had fallen from the roof of the drain and completely barred the passage. For a time he was almost in despair: he could not turn to reach the stone, and to escape by the outlet was to give himself up to the guards, as day had already dawned. At length, by a desperate effort, he succeeded in pushing the stone along with his feet till it sank into a hollow; he then passed over it and reëntered

the cavern, bruised and bloody, just as the day-break bell rang to call the prisoners to their daily labor. A few nights afterward, Wooster and several of his fellow captives who were able to remove their fetters passed through the drain and escaped to the forests.

But a much more desperate outbreak than this is recorded in the prison annals as occurring on the 17th of May, 1781. At that time there were thirty desperate men confined in the vaults. The guard in charge of them consisted of a lieutenant, sergeant, corporal and twenty-four privates, several of the latter mere boys, and all lax in their ideas of discipline. The officers were armed with swords and pistols, the privates with muskets and fixed bayonets. On the night of the day in question, after the prisoners had been fastened in the dungeons, the wife of a convict named Young appeared and desired to see him, and, as there was nothing suspicious in this, the request was readily granted. Two officers lifted the trap, the rest of the guard being asleep, but no sooner was the heavy door unfastened than it was thrust violently up from beneath, and the whole body of prisoners rushed into the room. The two officers were at once struck down, the arms of the pri-

vates seized, and, after a sharp tussle, the insurgents became masters of the prison. In the *mêlée* six of the guard were wounded,—one mortally,—and a like number of the assailants. After this exploit the victors proceeded to close the hatches on their former guards and fled to the forests, and, with one or two exceptions, succeeded in escaping. This wholesale delivery produced the wildest excitement, and expressions not very complimentary to the management of the prison or to the honesty of the guards were freely bandied about. The Legislature, then in session, ordered an investigation, and a committee was appointed to repair to Newgate and inquire into the facts. The report of this committee affords specimens of grim humor worth extracting:

“Jacob Southwell was awakened by the tumult, took a gun and ran out of the guardhouse, but durst not go back for fear they would hurt him. (N. B.—A young man more fit to carry fish to market than to keep guard at Newgate.) Nathan Phelps who was also asleep, waked, but could do nothing, the prisoners having possession of the guardhouse (a small lad, just fit to drive plough with a very gentle team). He went to Mr. Viets’s and stayed till morning (poor boy!). Abigail, the

wife of John Young, *alias* Mattick, says that the first night she came to prison she gave her husband fifty-two silver dollars; her husband told her after he came out that he had given Sergeant Lilly fifty of them in order that he may suffer the prisoners to escape; that he told her the sergeant purposely left the door of the south jail unlocked; that Sergeant Lilly was not hurt; that she borrowed the money of a peddler; that she heard Lilly say it was a great pity such likely men should live and die in that place."

A new commandant and guards for the prison were appointed, and after a time the excitement subsided.

In 1790, Connecticut, "free and independent," made Newgate the State prison of the Commonwealth; and as it was perhaps the first penal institution of this character in the United States, and was withal somewhat peculiar in its construction and management, the details of its internal economy from this time forward must be interesting and valuable. Fortunately, from the narratives of travelers, the records of the State, and the researches of the local historian, these details have been preserved in a very satisfactory manner. The traveler Kendall, who visited the prison

in 1807, when it was at its best estate, in his "Travels in the Northern Parts of the United States," gives a vivid sketch of the daily routine of the prison as then conducted. He says, "On being admitted into the yard, I found a sentry under arms within the gate and eight soldiers drawn up in line in front of the gaoler's house. A bell summoning the prisoners to work had already rung, and in a few moments they began to make their appearance. They came in irregular numbers, sometimes two or three together, and sometimes a single one alone; but whenever one or more were about to cross the yard to the smithery, the soldiers were ordered to present in readiness to fire. The prisoners were heavily ironed, and secured both by handcuffs and fetters, and, being therefore unable to walk, could only make their way by a sort of jump or hop. On entering the smithery some went to the sides of the forges, where collars dependent by iron chains from the roofs were fastened round their necks, and others were chained in pairs to wheelbarrows. The number of prisoners was about forty; and when they were all disposed of in the manner described, sentries were placed within the buildings which contained them. This establishment, as I

have said, is designed to be, from all its arrangements, an object of terror, and everything is accordingly contrived to make the life endured in it as burdensome and miserable as possible. . . .

“The trapdoor being lifted up, I went down an iron ladder perpendicularly fixed to the depth of about fifty feet. From the foot of the ladder a rough, narrow, and low passage descends still deeper till it terminates at a well of clear water, over which is an air shaft seventy feet in height, and guarded at its mouth, which is within the gaol yard, by a hatch of iron. The cells are near the well, but at different depths beneath the surface, none perhaps exceeding sixty feet. They are small, rugged, and accommodated with wooden berths and some straw. The straw was wet, and there was much humidity in every part of this obscure region; but I was assured I ought to attribute this only to the remarkable wetness of the season; that the cells were in general dry, and that they were not found unfavorable to the health of the prisoners.

“Into these cells the prisoners are dismissed at four o’clock in the afternoon of every day without exception, and at all seasons of the year. They descend to their fetters and handcuffs, and at

about four o'clock in the morning they ascend the iron ladder, climbing it as well as they can by the aid of their fettered limbs. It is to be observed that no women are confined here, the law providing that female convicts, guilty of crimes for which men are confined in Newgate prison, are to be sent to the county gaols. . . .

"Going again into the workshop or smithery, I found the attendants of the prison delivering pickled pork for the dinner of the prisoners. Pieces were given separately to the parties at each forge. They were thrown upon the floor, and left to be washed and boiled in the water used for cooling the iron wrought at the forges. Meat had been distributed in like manner for breakfast. The food of the prison is regulated for each day in the week, and consists in an alternation of pork, beef and peas, with which last no flesh-meat is allowed. Besides the caverns or excavations below, and the gaoler's house above, there are other apartments prepared for the prisoners, and particularly a hospital, of which the neatness and airiness afford a strong contrast to the other parts of the prison. It was also satisfactory to find that in this hospital there were no sick."

Supplementary to Mr. Kendall's narrative, the following sketch of the daily routine at Newgate, written by a gentleman who was a frequent visitor at the prison in his boyhood and familiar with its management, will be read with interest: "The hatches were opened and the prisoners called out of their dungeons each morning at daylight, and three were ordered to 'heave up' at a time; a guard followed the three to their shop, placing them at their work, and chaining those to the block whose tempers were thought to require it. All were brought out likewise in squads of three, and each followed by a guard. To those who never saw the operation their appearance cannot be truly conceived as they vaulted forth from the dungeon in their blackness, their chains clanking at every step, and their eyes flashing fire upon the bystanders. It resembled, perhaps, more than anything, the belching from the bottomless pit. After a while their rations for the day were carried to them in their several shops. Each one divided his own rations to suit himself. Some cooked over their own mess in a small kettle at their leisure, while others, disregarding ceremonies, seized their allowance, and ate it on an anvil or a block. . . . They were allowed to swap

rations, exchange commodities, barter, buy and sell at their pleasure. Some would swap their rations for cider, and often would get so tipsy that they could not work. During the day the guard was changed once in two hours at the sound of a horn, and in the night a guard entered the caverns every hour and a half and counted the prisoners. The punishments inflicted for offenses and neglect of duty were severe flogging, confinement in stocks in the dungeon, being fed on bread and water during the time, double or treble sets of irons, hanging by the heels, etc.,—all tending to inflame their revenge and hatred; and seldom were appeals made to their reason or better feelings.”

No books or reading matter of any description were furnished the prisoners, and there seems to have been no recognition of them as men for whom reformation was possible or desirable, except the provision made for their religious instruction on Sunday. A few years after the prison was established by legislative act, the pastor of the society at East Granby became chaplain of the institution. One service on the Sabbath was deemed sufficient, and this was held at first in the nail shop, some of the more refractory of the au-

dience being chained to the nail blocks to insure peace and quietness in the assembly. Later, a chapel was built, in which the townspeople and prisoners worshipped together.

Some interesting details of the economy of the prison are given in a report of its overseers, made to the Legislature in 1810. We make room for a few extracts:

“The winter clothing of the prisoners consists of two check-flannel shirts, a short coat, one pair of pants of home-made cloth, two pairs of woolen stockings, and one pair of shoes. Their summer clothing consists of a change of towcloth frocks and trousers, with stockings and shoes. Their shirts, summer frocks, trousers, and stockings are shifted and washed once a week, and are boiled in strong lye made of ashes, which effectually destroys the vermin.

“The prisoners are lodged in huts or cabins made in the cavern. They are built on a floor elevated three feet above the ground, and are ranged on each side of a space which lies between them. The roofs and outer sides of these cabins are made close and tight with boards. The berths in these cabins are plentifully supplied with blankets, and generally with straw when the

prisoners wish it. The straw is shifted as often as necessary.

“The prisoners are secured by iron fetters around their ankles. While at work, a chain fastened to a block is locked into these fetters or round the ankle. For the more daring and refractory, heavier chains are occasionally used.

“No allowance is made to those prisoners who do more than their daily task. Formerly an allowance of one penny on each pound of nails over the daily task was allowed. But this practice for several years past has been discontinued. It was found this allowance induced them to slight their work and steal nails from each other at the forges.”

The sanitary effect of the dungeons on the prisoners, briefly touched on by the overseers, is worthy of further remark. Other observers have noted the fact, recorded by them, that the confinement was not detrimental to health; indeed, some of the prisoners reached extreme old age while incarcerated there. This circumstance was attributed by some to a medicinal quality in the mineral rock which forms the wall of the cavern; others supposed it to be due to the equable temperature. In 1811 experiments were made to

ascertain the mean temperature of the mines, when it was discovered that the mercury ranged eight degrees lower there in the hottest days of summer than in the coldest days of winter, and that the mean temperature was forty-eight degrees.

The overseers in 1810 reported the number of convicts as being forty-six. Sixteen years later the number had increased to one hundred and twenty-seven, imposing an annual tax on the State for their maintenance of seven thousand dollars. The cost and impossibility of accommodating and securing so many in the cavern led the State authorities to provide for the erection of another prison at Wethersfield. This was finished, and the prisoners removed thither, in 1827, since which time the old Newgate has been left to the ravages of decay.

CHAPTER XIII

CONNECTICUT'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

MANY students of American history never heard of—much less read—the Connecticut Declaration of Independence. This instrument, which has not become immortal, but deserves to be so, was in the form of a Proclamation issued by Governor Jonathan Trumbull, “with the advice of the Council and at the desire of the Representatives in General Court assembled,” on June 18, 1776, sixteen days before the better known Declaration of Philadelphia was adopted. Governor Trumbull’s paper so nearly covered the ground taken by the Philadelphia instrument, that when the latter arrived in Hartford, on July 12, the Governor and Council declined to publish it for the reason that it would be supererogatory, and the Declaration of Independence for this reason never was published in Connecticut. Dr. Charles J. Hoadley, State Librarian of Connecticut, in his fifteenth and last volume of the “Colonial Records

of Connecticut," published the paper entire from a contemporary broadside. It is as follows:

"By the Honorable

"JONATHAN TRUMBULL, Esq.,

"Governor and Commander-in-chief of the English Colony of Connecticut in New England.

"A PROCLAMATION

"The Race of Mankind was made in a State of Innocence and Freedom subjected only to the Laws of God the Creator, and through his rich Goodness, designed for virtuous liberty and Happiness, here and for ever; and when moral Evil was introduced into the World, and Man had corrupted his Ways before God, Vice and Iniquity came in like a Flood and Mankind became exposed, and a prey to the Violence, Injustice and Oppression of one another. God in great Mercy inclined his People to form themselves into Society, and to set up and establish civil Government for the Protection and security of their Lives and Properties from the Invasion of wicked men. But through Pride and ambition the Kings and Princes of the World appointed by the People the Guardians of their Lives and Liberties, early and almost universally degenerated into Tyrants, and

by Fraud or Force betrayed and wrested out of their hands the very Rights and Properties they were appointed to protect and defend. But a small part of the Human Race maintained and enjoyed any tolerable Degree of Freedom. Among those happy few, the nation of Great Britain was distinguished by a Constitution of Government wisely framed and modelled to support the Dignity and Power of the Prince, for the protection of the Rights of the People, and under which that Country in long succession enjoyed great Tranquillity and Peace, though not unattended with repeated and powerful efforts, by many of its haughty Kings, to destroy the Constitutional Rights of the People, and establish arbitrary Power and Dominion. In one of those convulsive struggles our Forefathers, having suffered in that their native Country great and variety of Injustice and Oppression, left their dear Connections and Enjoyments, and fled to this then inhospitable land to secure a lasting retreat from civil and religious Tyranny.

“The God of Heaven favored and prospered this Undertaking—made room for their settlement—increased and multiplied them to a very numerous People and inclined succeeding Kings

to indulge them and their children for many years the unmolested Enjoyment of the Freedom and Liberty they fled to inherit. But an unnatural King has risen up—violated his sacred Obligations and by the Advice of Evil Counsellors attempted to wrest from us, their children, the Sacred Rights we justly claim and which have been ratified and established by solemn Compact with, and recognized by his Predecessors and Fathers, Kings of *Great Britain*—laid upon us Burdens too heavy and grievous to be borne and issued many cruel and oppressive Edicts, depriving us of our natural, lawful and most important Rights, and subjecting us to the absolute Power and Controul of himself and the *British* Legislature; against which we have sought Relief, by humble, earnest and dutiful Complaints and Petitions: But, instead of obtaining Redress our Petitions have been treated with Scorn and Contempt, and fresh Injuries heaped upon us while hostile armies and ships are sent to lay waste our Country. In this distressing Dilemma, having no Alternative but absolute Slavery or successful Resistance, this, and the United American Colonies have been constrained by the overruling laws of Self Preservation to take up Arms for the Defence of all that

is sacred and dear to Freemen, and make this solemn Appeal to Heaven for the Justice of their Cause, and resist Force by Force.

“God Almighty has been pleased of his infinite Mercy to succeed our Attempts, and give us many Instances of signal Success and Deliverance. But the wrath of the King is still increasing, and not content with before employing all the Force which can be sent from his own Kingdom to execute his cruel Purposes, has procured, and is sending all the Mercenaries he can obtain from foreign countries to assist in extirpating the Rights of *America*, and with theirs almost all the liberty remaining among Mankind.

“In this most critical and alarming situation, this and all the Colonies are called upon and earnestly pressed by the Honorable Congress of the *American* Colonies united for mutual defence, to raise a large additional number of their militia and able men to be furnished and equipped with all possible Expedition for defence against the soon expected attack and invasion of those who are our Enemies without a Cause. In cheerful compliance with which request and urged by Motives the most cogent and important that can affect the human Mind, the General Assembly of this Col-

ony have freely and unanimously agreed and resolved, that upwards of Seven Thousand able and effective Men be immediately raised, furnished and equipped for the great and interesting Purposes aforesaid. And not desirous that any should go to a warfare at their own charges (though equally interested with others) for defence of the great and all-important Cause in which we are engaged, have granted large and liberal Pay and Encouragements to all who shall voluntarily undertake for the Defence of themselves and their country as by their acts may appear, I do *therefore* by and with the advice of the Counsel, and at the desire of the Representatives in General Court assembled, issue this PROCLAMATION, and make the solemn Appeal to the Virtue and public Spirit of the good People of this Colony. Affairs are hastening fast to a Crisis, and the approaching Campaign will in all Probability determine forever the fate of AMERICA. If this should be successful on our side, there is little to fear on account of any other. Be exhorted to rise therefore to superior exertions on this great Occasion, and let all that are able and necessary show themselves ready in Behalf of their injured and oppressed Country, and come forth to the help of the Lord

against the Mighty, and convince the unrelenting Tyrant of *Britain* that they are resolved to be *Free*. Let them step forth to defend their Wives, their little Ones, their Liberty, and everything they hold sacred and dear, to defend the Cause of their Country, their Religion, and their God. Let every one to the utmost of their Power lend a helping Hand, to promote and forward a design on which the salvation of *America* now evidently depends. Nor need any be dismayed: the Cause is certainly a just and a glorious one: God is able to save us in such way and manner as he pleases and to humble our proud Oppressors. The Cause is that of Truth and Justice; he has already shown his Power in our behalf, and for the Destruction of many of our Enemies. *Our Fathers trusted in him and were delivered*. Let us all repent and thoroughly amend our Ways and turn to him, put all our Trust and Confidence in him—in his Name go forth, and in his Name set up our Banners, and he will save us with temporal and eternal salvation. And while our Armies are abroad jeoparding their lives in the high Places of the Field,*

*The use of these words is very striking, seeing that in Governor Trumbull's own State the monument now standing, opposite New London, in honor of the victims of

let all who remain at home, cry mightily to God for the Protection of his Providence to shield and defend their lives from Death, and to crown them with victory and success. And in the Name of the said General Assembly I do hereby earnestly recommend it to all, both Ministers and People frequently to meet together for social prayer to Almighty God for the outpouring of his blessed Spirit upon this guilty land—That he would awaken his People to Righteousness and Repentance, bless our Councils, prosper our Arms and succeed the Measures using for our necessary self-defence—disappoint the evil and cruel Devices of our Enemies—preserve our precious Rights and Liberties, lengthen out our Tranquillity, and make us a People of his Praise, and the blessed of the Lord, as long as the Sun and Moon shall endure.

“And all the Ministers of the Gospel in this Colony, are directed and desired, to publish this Proclamation in their several churches and congregations, and to enforce the Exhortations thereof

the massacre of Groton Heights, bears most appropriately the entire verse (Judges, v. 18). “Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardied their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.”

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by their own pious Example and public instructions.

“Given under my Hand at the Council Chamber in Hartford, the 18th day of June Anno Domini 1776.

“JONATHAN TRUMBULL.”

CHAPTER XIV

ANCIENT LITCHFIELD

ONE of the most charming of New England villages is Litchfield, in northwestern Connecticut—charming in a way very palpable to the senses, though difficult indeed to define, as one is forced to conclude after passing an hour under its elms in a vain effort to discover the source of his emotions. Perhaps this is to be found in its utter quiet and seclusion, or in its beauty of situation; perhaps, again, in its historical importance, in the traditions of past glory and greatness which throw over it a glamour of old romance and antiquarian splendor. It was formerly of the first social and political importance, and has been so fruitful of heroic men and women, and has so abounded in historic deeds, that it may be said to have a history and a literature of its own; indeed, many of the names which the village gossips interweave with their tales would confer luster on any annals. The Wolcotts, father and son, Ethan

Allen, Colonel Tallmadge, Judges Reeves, Adams, Church and Gould, Dr. Bellamy, Dr. Bushnell, the three Beecher brothers, John Pierpont, poet and pastor, Aaron Burr, John C. Calhoun, Catharine Beecher, Mrs. Stowe, Hollister, the Demings, the Huntingtons, the Seymours, the Woodruffs, are a few only of the famous names intimately connected with the village history. In addition is the wealth of tradition before mentioned, to whose subtle charm even the bitterest iconoclast would submit both reason and imagination; hence the curious stranger, as he loiters through its streets in a summer atmosphere of poesy and sentiment, will find on every side reminders of "the days that are no more."

About the antiquated mansion of Governor Wolcott on South street, for instance, this "legend of good women" still lingers:

"At the beginning of the Revolution, as is well known, the patriots stood in imminent need of ammunition, especially of lead to run into bullets, and early in 1776 the leaden statue of George III. which stood on Bowling Green in New York, was overthrown and brought to Litchfield, where it was made into bullets by the ladies of the village, the men being absent on more actively martial duties.

"The statue was deposited in Governor Wolcott's apple orchard, and ladies of the first rank and fortune—among them Laura and Mary Wolcott, the fair daughters of the Governor—engaged in the enterprise. It was rough work for hands unaccustomed to labor; curls were tangled and fair faces flushed, and tender fingers were blistered by the molten lead, but they persevered, and at sunset a conical mound of forty-two thousand and eighty-eight cartridges (as is learned from a paper left by Governor Wolcott himself) attested to the skill and fidelity with which they labored. There was a grim sort of humor, fully appreciated, no doubt, by the stern Governor and his associates, in this making King George's statue into bullets wherewith to mow down the battalions of King George's army."

Across the way from Governor Wolcott's is the mansion house of Judge Tapping Reeve, where Lafayette and Rochambeau were entertained in May, 1777, and which was the home of Aaron Burr while a resident of Litchfield. Burr's only sister, to whom he was deeply attached, the wife of Judge Reeve, was then mistress of the mansion, and he came hither to engage in the study of the law fresh from his theological controversy with

Dr. Bellamy, who lived in Bethlehem, but seven miles distant. Here he passed a year or more, studying a little law, paying court to the village beauties, and hunting and fishing in the adjacent woods and waters, and from here he set out with his friend Ogden to join the Continental army before Boston, and later for the heroic march with Arnold through the wilderness to Quebec. While absent on this expedition he wrote several interesting letters to his sister which are still preserved in the village.

A few years after Burr's departure Litchfield welcomed another American of ominous fame—John C. Calhoun—who passed almost three years of his checkered career in this classic village, and here nursed those gloomy, disorganizing fancies which this generation has seen ripen into bitter fruit. Perhaps the golden legends of the village center about two ancient mansions in North Street, one the home of Judge Gould, where the students of the famous Litchfield Law School met for recitation; the other the square-built, aggressive-looking structure which was the seat of Miss Sarah Pierce's no less famous Young Ladies' Seminary. These two schools drew their students from every part of the Union, and gave to the village a na-

tional fame. Miss Pierce's school was established in 1792, and was very successful from the first—due, a cynical observer would insist, to the fact, patent to marriageable maidens and managing mammas, of the existence in the village of a law school which numbered among its students one hundred of the most eligible young men of the country. Considering the strict laws which then governed the relations of the sexes, it is somewhat strange that the schools should have been placed so near to each other—with only a narrow yard intervening; but this was probably the result of accident rather than of design; certain it is that a handkerchief waved from the rear windows of Miss Pierce's establishment would have been at once perceived in Judge Reeve's recitation room, nor could the *Romeos* and *Juliets* of the day have met but few obstacles in arranging their stolen interviews; yet so salutary was the moral atmosphere of the village, and so nice the sense of honor and purity implanted in the breasts of these young people, that not a breath of scandal arose against them—not even a moonlight escapade occurred to mar the harmony of their social relations.

In one of the ancient mansions of the village,

jealously guarded from the common eye, was shown me a most interesting collection of old letters and documents, some of them even possessing historical importance. The ancient packet, when opened, exhaled a faint odor of lavender, and the paper had taken on a yellowish tinge with the lapse of a hundred years. None of the letters was inclosed in an envelope, but each was folded and sealed with a wafer which was stamped with the seal of the writer; some of them had been sent by private hand, others by the post, and on these a fee of twenty-five cents had been collected. Most of them were addressed to the lady by whom they were preserved and from whom they have descended to the present possessor; others had been directed to her father, a once famous college president, and to her husband, a former Chief Justice, and were from men of the first rank in Church and State; several were from her brother, written when a soldier in the Continental army, but by far the larger number were from female friends and correspondents. These last were so delicate in sentiment and so gracefully and fluently expressed as to effectually explode the theory advanced by some modern pedants that but little attention was paid to the culture of

the female intellect in the days of our grandmothers.

Two of these epistles I am permitted to publish. The first is an ancient love letter, dated more than a hundred years ago, written by a former Chief Justice of Connecticut to the lady whom he afterward married, and is of a class always interesting. It reads as follows:

“My Lovely Sallie: When I was in New Haven I wrote to you by your Aunt Fannie, which I suppose you have received before this time; if you have not this will serve to inform you that I did, and that I am never forgetful of my dear Sallie. The bearer is going this minute, and I cannot detain him. I did not know until a moment ago that he was going, and can therefore only inform you that I am well, and of that which you very well know, that I want to see my charmer. If you remember, I informed you that I had in my possession a letter which I had never sent, and which I now enclose to supply the defects of this. If Aaron is with you, give him my kindest love.

“I propose to come to Fairfield as soon as I hear that you are got there.”

The second letter is from Jonathan Edwards to

Aaron Burr, the honored president of Princeton College, and father of the better known man of the same name. It is dated May 5, 1752, some two months before the marriage of President Burr to Esther Edwards. The finances of Princeton College were then in a crippled state, and President Burr had been untiring in his efforts to place it on a solid financial foundation. He had written, pleaded, preached for it, had even made several journeys into New England seeking contributions in its behalf, and was now meditating a journey to Great Britain on a similar errand. Concerning this project, in answer to one from President Burr, Mr. Edwards wrote the following letter:

“SHEFFIELD, May 6, 1752.

“Rev. and Dear Sir: I thank you for your favor by Williams your pupil, and also for your other letter rec'd before. My not answering them before now was not in the least owing to want of resolution, or any disposition to uphold any misunderstanding, but partly from the multitude of affairs which have continually pressed my mind, which yet would not have prevented my writing if I had known of any good opportunity. I heard nothing of Mr. Josiah Williams going away in

the winter till after he had gone: if I had I should doubtless have wrote by him. As to the affair of the report of what you said concerning my book on the 'Terms of Communion,' &c., from the credit I give your representation, I fully believe you have been misrepresented, and therefore don't think it worth while to make an uproar in tracing the matter to the original.

"I would pray you to give your mind no further uneasiness about the matter, as though anything remained with me to occasion disaffection: I assure you there is nothing of that nature. You are pleased to ask my thoughts concerning your proposed voyage to Great Britain for the sake of New Jersey College. You have those nearer to you than myself, as well informed of the circumstances and necessities of the College, that are vastly more able and in fitter circumstances to advise you—Governor Belcher and the trustees in particular. There doubtless might great advantages be obtained by your going to England and Scotland and spending about a year in Great Britain, more than by all letters that could be written; the only doubt is whether the College won't extremely suffer by your being so long absent, but of that I am not a fit person to judge. One thing I will ven-

ture to give you my thoughts on, namely: that since you have not had the smallpox, if you find a skillful and prudent physician under whose care you can put yourself, you would take the smallpox by inoculation before you go, after properly preparing your body for it by physic and diet. . . . If you go to Great Britain I shall be ready to do my utmost to further the designs of your going in my next letter to Scotland. Mr. Wright can inform you something of the state of things in Stockbridge. You may perhaps do much to promote our affairs in London: but I hope to write to you again about these matters before you go. In the mean time, asking your prayers, I am, dear sir,

“Your friend and brother,

“JONATHAN EDWARDS.

The foregoing letter forms a part of the unwritten history of Princeton College, and ought to be preserved in the archives of that institution.

CHAPTER XV

MINING IN CONNECTICUT

NOT long ago a paragraph went the rounds of the press announcing the formation of a syndicate of capitalists in Wallingford and New Haven for the purpose of boring for coal in Connecticut. The announcement brought a smile of derision to the faces of many, no doubt, yet these capitalists are not wholly without reason for the belief that coal in quantity may be found there. The thrifty little State has made more progress in agriculture and manufacture than in mining, it is true, yet the mineral wealth within her borders is remarkable, as was shown to my satisfaction recently by a gentleman largely interested in the coal-mining experiment above referred to, whose knowledge of the State's mineral resources is varied and comprehensive.

"The rocks of Connecticut abound in veins of mineral," he began, "some of them exceedingly rare—in fact, seven minerals entirely new to

science were once found in a single ledge in the western part of the State. Merchantable mica, a rare commodity, has been taken by the hundred pounds from the feldspar beds of Ridgefield. Asbestos has been found in the limestone quarries in Redding. Jonathan Trumbull, the Revolutionary Governor of Connecticut, supplied his troops with lead taken partly from a mine in Middletown. Many engineers would be surprised to learn that a vein of cobalt has been successfully worked in this State. It was opened in Chatham, near Middletown, about 1762, by Dr. Stephannes, a German chemist, and large quantities of ore were shipped in casks to Germany or England—no one knew exactly where, it being the Doctor's whim to keep his movements as secret as possible. If you follow up that singular trap formation which begins with the East and West Rocks at New Haven and stretches northward to Massachusetts, you will find it honeycombed with holes dug by prospectors for the precious metals, and at Simsbury, in this range, you will see an immense cavern, with shafts, galleries and chambers, excavated before the Revolution for the rich hoards of copper they contained. This mine later became famous as the Newgate, the State prison of

Connecticut. Several veins of lead and copper have been discovered and superficially worked in the hills of Plymouth, in the Naugatuck Valley.

“If we pass westward over the hills separating this valley from that of the Shepaug, a branch of the Housatonic, we find in ancient Woodbury a rich mineral field. Mr. Cothren in his history of that town gives the following list of minerals actually discovered there, or in its immediate vicinity: iron, ocher, Fuller’s-earth, agates, prehnite, epidote, chalcedony, purple quartz, plumbago, magnetic iron pyrites, albite, white copperas, dialogyte, triplite, gypsum, kyanite, mesotype, andalusite, spar, hornblende, botryoidal chalidocrase, garnet, dolomite, bitumen, opal, chrichtonite, mispickel, yellow copper pyrites, coal, mica and spathic or steel ore. This latter merits a further description. It is one of the most remarkable mineral deposits in the country. The mine is up the Shepaug, some six miles above its confluence with the Housatonic, and is marked by the great grimy stack of an iron furnace. It is on a hill some 350 feet high, and has a shaft about 150 feet deep. The ore is harder than calcareous spar, and may be smelted into the very best German steel. In fact, it is the only ore in this

country that can compete with ore from the German mines. An analysis shows protoxide of iron 57 to 60, carbonic acid 34 to 36, with traces of lime, manganese and magnesia. It was first opened in 1750 for silver, and worked for that metal till a shaft 125 feet deep had been sunk, when it was abandoned. It has been worked to some extent within the last twenty-five years for spathic ore, and has produced steel of excellent quality, but the title is unfortunately in dispute, and has been for some years in the courts.

"The marble quarries of New Preston are no doubt well known to you, and the same might be said of the famous Salisbury iron-ore beds. As one goes up the Housatonic Valley, he strikes at Kent the first furnace supplied with ore from this district. There are one or two more furnaces at Cornwall Bridge, one at Lime Rock, two or three in Canaan. Seen at night, with the flames pouring from their great black stacks, they add not a little to the picturesqueness of that exceedingly interesting region. Three ore beds—the Old Hill, Davis and Chatfield—supply all of them and are situated on the east slope of the Taghkanic range, near the village of Salisbury.

These ore beds are the furthest remove from one's idea of iron mines, being simply huge openings, several acres in extent, in the sides of the green, grassy hills peculiar to that region. The ore is brown hematite of the best quality; the iron it makes is the best produced in the United States, and is made up into car wheels and other articles requiring the toughest and most malleable metal. Its quality is shown by the fact that early in the Revolution, Governor Jonathan Trumbull caused a foundry to be erected in Salisbury, and there cast from this iron, cannon, cannon balls, and other munitions for the patriot troops.

"Lower down the Housatonic Valley, at Sandy Hook in Newtown, we have a gold mine which was worked by British soldiers in the Revolution, and casks of its ore sent to England for treatment. From one pound of its ore seventy-two cents in gold and eleven in silver were taken, if the assayer is to be believed.

"But, to return to our own special undertaking. The working of all the veins I have named has been entirely superficial—the work of men without capital, skill or experience. Our project proposes to make use of all the appliances which capital can command, and prove the question

once for all whether there is a paying bed of coal, and perhaps iron, underlying our bituminous shales. We have formed a syndicate and have nearly succeeded in raising \$15,000 in \$2.50 shares (6,000 shares), representing a capital stock (should the enterprise prove successful) of \$120,000 at \$20 per share. We have leased a tract of fifteen hundred acres of land in Durham, a town adjoining Wallingford on the east, and propose to explore it for coal with the modern diamond drill. We have chosen this neighborhood because here are strong indications of coal. Perhaps you would like to read the report of a well-known geologist who has recently examined this tract for us.

“Prof. Forrest Shepard writes: ‘I have visited and examined your leased mineral lands in the township of Durham, Conn., and find surface indications for coal-seams superior to those I found in North Carolina, where within about 200 yards of a trap-ridge I discovered an excellent coal-seam of about six feet in thickness; even better than the surface indications I found at Chesterfield, Va., where at a depth of 700 feet, coal 30 feet in thickness based on hard granite, was struck, which has led to a vast coal trade.

. . . I hope a test will be made on your property, in places pointed out, by boring, for the satisfaction of the public, and to settle the question whether we have a good coal deposit so near home.' ”

This conversation was brought to the writer's mind afresh a few days since by a two days' ride through one of the prettiest portions of Connecticut, which brought to notice much of this newly-discovered mineral wealth of which our friend had spoken. The ride embraced the towns of Ridgefield, Redding, Bethel and Newtown, which stretch across the northern portion of Fairfield County, from the New York State line to the Housatonic.

We first visited Branchville in Ridgefield, a little station on the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad, some twelve miles above Norwalk, and notable as the place where, in 1877, a remarkable group of minerals, entirely new to science, was discovered. A deep feldspar quarry, from which several thousand tons of the finest feldspar have been shipped, now occupies the place where they were taken out, which is on the lower slope of a hill rising steeply up into granite crags. The man to whom belongs the credit of first introducing

them to science, was the Rev. John Dickinson, who at the time was pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Redding. Mr. Dickinson's account of the discovery, which we had heard before visiting the place, was quite interesting. "I was," said he, "one day rambling among the Branchville ledges, when I discovered in Fillow's field and on the walls, a mineral entirely new to me, and, as I believed, to science. I selected several specimens, and left some at Columbia College and some with Professor Brush, of Yale.

"Brush was incredulous—some of the Branchville specimens had before been taken by the elder Dana without result—but in a few days I got a letter from him asking for more; then shortly after I met him on the cars, on his way to Branchville, and found him enthusiastic. He had opened the vein, had found albite, microcline, and new minerals that promised wonderful results. Well, the matter was followed up until seven entirely new minerals were discovered and described in the scientific journals, viz.: First, Eosphorite, chemically akin to phosphorite; second, Triploidite; third, Dickinsonite; fourth, Lithiophilite; fifth, Reddingite; sixth, Fairfieldite,

and seventh, Fallowite. All mineralogists agreed that this was a colossal discovery; there were, however, other remarkable features connected with it. Some twenty-five different known minerals were found in the pocket, many of them occurring in unique forms. We found mica, for instance, in globular form; curved mica we call it; and specimens sent to twenty prominent mineralogists in various parts of the world elicited the fact that they had never before known it to occur in that form. Again there is a mineral known as spodumene, which contains lithia, and occurs usually in small crystals; but here a crystal was found eight feet long, sixteen inches wide and between four and five thick. Another rare feature was that this spodumene had been pseudomorphed into another rare mineral known as cymatolite, which also appeared in large crystals." Professors Brush and Dana, in the "American Journal of Science and Arts," for July, 1878, gave an interesting account of the discovery and description of the minerals found by them on a visit to this spot.

Further proof of activity in developing the mineral resources of this part of the State is seen in a large frame building standing just across

the track from the quarry on the line of the branch road leading to Ridgefield. This building, 161 feet by 50, two stories and basement, has been erected and furnished with powerful and costly machinery for the purpose of crushing the quartz, or, more properly, oxide of silicon, found in the neighboring hills. The company owns three quarries within a radius of three miles of the works, and has others at command. The works comprise a kiln in which the stone is first calcined, an engine, chases and rubbing tubs in which, after burning, the silicon is crushed and then ground to a fine powder. The product is used in the arts of making soap and paint, and as glazing for pottery.

For our second day's ride we drove to Bethel, eight miles, and from thence three miles in a southerly direction, to inspect a famous tourmaline rock and a second feldspar quarry recently opened near by. Our road led along the borders of Redding, Bethel and Newtown, and as we drove we were sometimes in one town, sometimes in another. The region is as wild, woody and lonesome as could be imagined, a forest of several square miles in extent, known as Hopewell Woods, covering the craggy, almost mountainous

hills that here divide the richly cultivated hill slopes of Redding from those of Newtown. A mile's travel through a forest path fairly paved with glossy brown chestnuts brought us to the quarry, which only began active operations last April, but has already opened a large chasm in the rocky heart of the hill. This vein, we learned, is controlled jointly by the New Jersey Flint and Spar Company and the International Pottery, both of Trenton, New Jersey, and all its stone is shipped there, being hauled three miles and a half by horses to Plumtrees, a way station on the Shepaug Railroad.

Some very interesting specimens have been unearthed in quarrying here. We saw in Superintendent Sloan's office an immense tourmaline crystal, measuring three feet by eighteen inches, and very pretty specimens of beryl, columbite, albite, mica and rose-quartz. Several of these veins of feldspar crop out through the forest, and as the stone, it is said, can be profitably shipped to England, it is possible that a great industry may spring up among these rock-ribbed hills. Coming out, we stopped to view, near the roadside, the tourmaline rock, an object of interest for many years to both professional and

amateur mineralogists. It is an immense granite boulder stranded on a hilltop, and stuck full, like plums in pudding, of black glistening tourmaline crystals of all shapes, sizes and degrees of brilliancy. Black fragments and heaps of tourmaline dust at the base of the rock bear witness to the presence and ardor of many prospectors and specimen-hunters.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PEQUOT INDIANS

IT is a fact little known that a remnant of the once powerful Pequot race still maintains a tribal organization in Connecticut. Schaghticoke, the ancient seat of this people, is situated in the town of Kent under the Schaghticoke Mountain in the middle valley of the Housatonic. It is on the edge of the great bowl-like depression in the hills that make room for the beautiful Kent meadows, and two and one half-miles south of pretty Kent village. The Housatonic flows before it so near that there is barely room for the village between it and the mountain. Schaghticoke consists of six little, brown, clap-boarded one-story houses tenanted by some seventeen persons. The reservation of three hundred acres comprises Schaghticoke Mountain, valuable only for its timber, and extends west some two miles to the State of New York. The Indian question excites so much interest just now, that the history of this

ancient people, Connecticut's dealings with them and its results is not without significance and value. The founder of the Schaghticoke tribe was Mawwehu, a chief of the royal Pequot blood. When that tribe was dispersed by Captain Mason and his men, a fragment, including several members of the royal family, settled at Dover in New York, some five miles west of Schaghticoke where Mawwehu was born. He had all the ardor of his race for domination, and longed for a people to rule over. On a hunting excursion one day, he discovered the Kent Plains, then uninhabited by man, and determined to found a colony there. He went to his own people, to the Mohegans of the Hudson, the Housatonics and other wandering tribes and, gathering them into the valley, formed a community, with himself as head. This was about 1735. In 1736 the tribe numbered one hundred warriors. An interesting episode in its history was the arrival there in 1742 of Christian Henry Rauch, the famous Moravian missionary, who preached to the tribe with success. Mawwehu and one hundred and fifty of his people were converted; a church was established, and the Indians became sober and industrious. Unfortunately, this success of the Moravians did not

meet the views of the white traders and dissolute characters who, as early as 1738, had pressed into the valley, and they proceeded to drive away the missionaries. They first poisoned the minds of the Indians against them, and then a little later accused them of being in league with the French and drove them from the valley. Rauch and his companions fled to the Moravian settlements at Bethlehem, Pa., and quite a number of their Indian converts went with them.

The Government of Connecticut pursued a just and liberal policy toward those of them who remained. When the township of Kent was formed, two large reservations were granted them—one in the valley on the east side of the river, and the other of some 2,000 acres among the mountains. They were placed under the religious care of the church in Kent. The common schools, when established, were freely open to them. When complaints of the white man's aggressions were made to the General Court, a committee was appointed and justice was generally done. For a hundred years they have been surrounded by an industrious and law-abiding community; yet their course has been so steadily downward that they are now on the verge of extinction. Indolence, drunken-

ness, and intermarriage with negroes and the lower class of whites are largely responsible for this. Their improvidence was such that as early as 1752 they had sold all the planting lands in the valley. In 1757 they had become so incapable of maintaining themselves that the colony appointed an overseer, to whom their property was committed, and who was charged with their oversight and maintenance. From that time forward the affairs of the tribe have been administered by an agent of the State. In a petition of 1786 they admit their ignorance and inability to take care of themselves, and implore the continued assistance of the whites. Their number is stated in this petition to be males 36, females 35—of whom 20 were children.

In 1801 they were spoken of as being reduced to "35 idle, intemperate beings who cultivated only six acres of ground." They had then some 1,200 or 1,500 acres of mountain land, which remained in their possession chiefly because they were unable to sell it, and as the debts of the tribe, from sickness and other causes, were then pressing, Abraham Fuller, the overseer, petitioned that this land might be sold, the proceeds to be applied to discharging the debts, and the surplus,

if any, invested as a permanent fund. The land sold for £1,300, and the money was applied as the petition suggested except that £200 was used in building six cottages for the Indians. In 1846 the overseer reported ten Indians of pure blood and thirty half-breeds under his care.

Wishing to judge for myself of the present condition of the tribe, I one day sought an interview with the overseer, Mr. Henry Roberts, who lives at Gaylordville, a little village in the town of New Milford, and was invited to accompany him on a visit to the Indian village. On setting out a large, loaf-shaped mountain in the north, some three miles distant, was pointed out as Schaghticoke Mountain. I shall not soon forget the beautiful tints of its autumn foliage. Our road lay along the left bank of the river over little foothills of the valley, between meadows and pastures, and little patches of forest. The valley walls contract as you go northward, so that your experience is much like riding into the mouth of a funnel. After following the river for two and one-half miles we crossed it by a firm, single-span bridge, swept around the point of the mountain by a road that overhung the river, passed five little brown cottages, one of them deserted, and drew up at the

home of Vinie, the Queen of the Schaghticokes—Queen by inheritance, she being a great-granddaughter of Mawwehu, the Pequot chief. Vinie received us very affably. She is a tall, angular woman showing few traces of Indian blood, and was clad in a clean calico gown and apron of the same material. According to her own account, she is seventy-five years of age, although her neighbors say that she is several years older. There is no carpet on the floor of her cottage. Its furniture consists of a cooking stove, three or four chairs, a clock, a basket, two dogs—a big and a little one—and a shaving-horse where she prepares the splints for her baskets. A pair of rude stairs leads to a loft above. Questioned concerning the origin of her people, the Queen gave a very interesting and correct account of the founding of the tribe. She remembered hearing her grandmother tell many Indian tales and traditions—love stories, “booger” stories, exploits of heroes in war and the chase—but could not remember them sufficiently well to narrate them for her visitors’ benefit. Asked why her people did not retain the habits and language of the Indians, she said that they had lived so long among the white folk that they loved white folk’s ways. Asked how many

in number her people were, she said she "could not tell; they were scattered like grasshoppers." Pressed for an answer, she replied, "About forty, I suppose." Vinie is a member of the Congregational Church in Kent, and her pastor reports her as living up to the average standard. She has been busy and industrious all her life, weaving baskets, cultivating the acre or two of land about her dwelling, and has relied very little on the fund for support. Her mother was a white woman. She has a half-sister, Rachel, who sometimes shares her abode and who is full blood.

The next cottage south of the Queen's is occupied by George Cogswell, his wife and four children. The husband is partly negro, the wife full Indian. The next dwelling, a few yards south, is the home of an eccentric individual known locally as Hen Pan. He prides himself on his unmixed blood, and in scorn of his neighbor's race-mixing propensities has marked on his chimney in large letters "I. A. M. O. K." His brother, Jim Pan, who has a white wife and two children, shares his cottage. Of the two other dwellings on the reservation one is occupied by Mrs. Kilson, a widow, an industrious and capable woman, the mother of nine children, of whom only one re-

mains with her, and the other by Value Kilson, who has a wife and four children. The ancient burying-ground of the Schaghticokes—a triangular piece of ground inclosed by a dilapidated board fence—adjoins Value's cottage. The graves are mostly marked by wooden head-boards, and many have not even this memorial. The ground is situated directly under a cliff, over which a mountain brook tumbles.

The present overseer has been five years in office, and, being a firm, as well as a humane, man, has somewhat improved the financial condition of the tribe. He has aimed to make them as far as possible self-supporting, and the fund in his hands has shown a steady yearly increase. He has the sole charge of the tribe, invests their money to the best advantage, gives them orders on the country merchants for necessary articles which they are unable to procure for themselves, and furnishes them with medicine and medical attendance when sick. Each year he returns three reports of his stewardship—one to the Secretary of State, one to the District Court of Litchfield county, and a third to the Town Clerk of Kent. From his last report (September, 1881) I learn that the present reservation comprises three hundred acres of land,

six dwelling houses (one unoccupied) and three stores, the whole valued at \$3,500. The fund now amounts to \$5,427.45, an increase in five years of some \$628.

Mr. Roberts can make no exact return of the present number of the tribe, as its members are widely scattered, but places their probable number at fifty. Of these, however, but three or four are of unmixed Indian blood.

CHAPTER XVI

GREENFIELD HILL, A ONCE FAMOUS VILLAGE

NOW and then the pilgrim chances on a nook of such quiet beauty and serenity as to suggest that earthly paradise which has filled so many poet's dreams. Such a place is the little hamlet from which I write. Let one imagine a green common, well shaded, with an ancient church and weather-beaten academy on one side and several fine old country houses on the other, placed on the summit of a hill overlooking several miles of green meadows and the Sound, and he has a picture of this Arcadia, which is known in local parlance as "the Hill." All about it is a mass of greenery—green pastures, meadows, forests, corn-fields—only in the grain fields does this prevailing color change. The prevailing color appears, too, we have remarked, in the local nomenclature, Green Farms and Greenfield being the names of two hamlets at our doors. There is a fine old country seat here—the Bronson estate—which was

the objective point of the Tally-ho coach in one of its outings a few summers ago, a fact which, for the first time in many years, gave the little village a generous notice in the daily press.

We find here a polite and agreeable society, the legacy of a somewhat notable past; the courtesy and flavor of good old Dr. Dwight's day still remain. For the village was once the home of that eminent divine; the parish was his first charge; in the old academy which has been mentioned, his famous school was kept; and tucked away in cupboards and secretaries of the old colonial houses we find now and then a time-stained and moldy copy of his still more famous poem, "Greenfield Hill" — a poem in which rural delights, grave historical events and prophetic visions are blended with considerable poetic skill and ingenuity. We had the pleasure of handling one of these, a small volume in homely binding, as was the fashion of books in 1794. The poem is in seven parts. We have copied the heads of the arguments: I. The Prospect. II. The Flourishing Village. III. The burning of Fairfield. IV. The Destruction of the Pequots. V. The Clergyman's Advice to the Villagers. VI. The Farmer's Advice to the Villagers. VII. The

Vision, or Prospect of the Future Happiness of America.

About Dr. Dwight's pastorate village memories naturally cluster. He became pastor here in 1783, after a most precocious boyhood. It is said of him that he read the Bible at four, studied Latin by himself at six, and was fitted for college at eight. In 1765, at the age of thirteen, he entered Yale College, was graduated at seventeen, and became a tutor in his college at nineteen. In 1777 he entered the Revolutionary army as chaplain, where, like his friend Joel Barlow, he exerted a happier influence on the soldiers by his lyrics than by his sermons. It was after leaving the army that he assumed charge of the church at Greenfield Hill. There are old residents in the village who still remember the Doctor, who died at New Haven in 1817. Our most pleasant employment is to sit under a venerable elm near the common with one of these worthy old gentlemen, and listen to tales of the former glory of the village.

"Dr. Dwight," he began, on our first interview, "came here on a very insufficient salary, and to eke it out he opened an academy for young people. Over yonder there stood a little brown shop where Gershom Hubbell dressed leather and then fash-

ioned it into breeches of excellent cut and workmanship, while his daughter was noted for her skill as a glovemaker. This shop the Doctor secured, and his first school session was opened there as early as 1784, if not earlier. The Academy was built for him in 1785 or 1786, and after that his school rapidly became one of the most famous in the country. He had an ambition to be thought one of the best educators of the day. His boys, intended for Yale, were better fitted, it is said, than those of any other graduate. Scholars soon began to come from all parts of the world to study under him. In the early class were two Livingstons from Hudson River; Dubois, from France; Charles H. Pond, who later became Lieutenant-Governor of Connecticut; Joel R. Poinsett, Minister to Mexico and Secretary of War; two Capers from South Carolina, and Henry Baldwin, afterward a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States. Contemporary with these was a class of young ladies—the three Misses Burr, of Fairfield; Miss Young, of Bridgeport; Sally Nichols, of Newtown, and others—said to have been a class of remarkable beauty. A little romance came of this juxtaposition, too, for in the Fairfield records you will find recorded the mar-

riage of Abigail Burr to William Henry Capers, of the parish of St. Helena, S. C.

“In the school there were two daily sessions of three hours each. Wednesday was a red-letter day: in the afternoon the boys declaimed, after which came a spelling-bee, the winners being let out a quarter of an hour before the others as a reward. In the evening the Doctor lectured on theology—lectures which he afterward published in a volume. In private life Doctor Dwight was very genial and hospitable, and kept open house; he was so famous, too, that many travelers and gentlemen of distinction would come to Greenfield to call on him. But those days passed, and have never come again. On the death of President Stiles, of Yale College, Doctor Dwight was called to the Presidency, and removed thither in 1795.”

“An old tavern stood on that corner,” said the same narrator, as we joined him another day under the elms, “that some of you clever young men might make something of if you would dig out the facts. It was kept by Joseph Bulkley at the time Doctor Dwight lived in Greenfield, and some famous men were entertained there first and last. Talleyrand and the Spanish Minister (whose name I forget) once dined there. It

was a famous resort for the judges and lawyers when the County Court was in session at Fairfield; such men as Chief Justice Reeve, Uriah Tracy, and Gideon Granger have often been its guests. Rufus King, our Minister to England; Joel Barlow, our Minister to France, with his wife, who was a sister of Judge Henry Baldwin; Gen. Rufus Putnam, of Ohio, and many others, I have myself seen there. They don't have such merrymakings now as used to be held in the old tavern. In winter there was a dance about once a month, with Mose Sturges to fiddle, and wine and plum cake for the feast. Dr. Dwight usually made it a point to come in, take a glass of wine and a piece of cake, tell a good story, and withdraw at a decorous hour."

Sometimes a spasm of activity seizes us, and we explore the surrounding country; I might have said the neighboring wilderness. Five miles west is the valley of the Saugatuck, and by following it a few yards above where the Greenfield road strikes it, we enter a deep, romantic gorge, which would have excited the raptures of many a traveler ere this had it been placed in Nevada or Arizona. There is a dark wooded mountain on the right, and on the left, fifty feet down, at the foot

of a precipice, the river tumbling and foaming over ledges of rock. We follow the brawling stream for two miles through thick woods, without seeing a vestige of human habitation save a charcoal-burner's deserted hut, or meeting anyone except the charcoal man on his huge spreading wagon of coal, bound to market, and then come suddenly on a little hamlet of neatly painted houses clustered about several low workshops on the bank of the river. The place, we learned, was called the Forge. This wildness, it must be remembered, was within four or five miles of the belt of populous communities which skirt the Connecticut shore of the Sound.

The valley of the Mill River, two miles east, is equally wild and romantic. In one of its spurs (a huge mass of ledges and precipitous rocks, in itself well worthy a visit) is a great natural or artificial curiosity, which has long puzzled the curious. It is a deep, smooth round hole in the rock of from twelve to sixteen quarts capacity. Tradition ascribes its origin to the Indians of the valley. It is certain that it was used by them for generations as a mortar in which to pound the corn raised on the adjacent lowlands; and whole families must have gathered there, for the rock about

the mortar is worn smooth by the tread of many feet.

If we drive southward we enter on different scenes. Here are farms in the highest state of cultivation, with buildings and lawns denoting both wealth and taste on the part of the owners. It is the home of the onion-grower. Nothing seems to grow but onions between Greenfield Hill and the sea. We pass many fields of five to ten acres each, and hear of growers who raise all the way from ten to twenty-five acres of the pungent bulbs.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BEGINNINGS OF A GREAT RAILROAD

THE law papers and many private papers of the Hon. Roger Sherman, one of the most prominent jurists of his day, are now in possession of the Fairfield County Historical Society in Bridgeport. Among them is a series of interesting documents, showing in a vivid way the violent opposition encountered by the now dominant railroad in making its way into this conservative region.

The first passenger railroad constructed in the United States was the Baltimore and Ohio, a section of which was formally opened July 4, 1828, the first locomotive for it being built by Peter Cooper in Baltimore. The second was the Mohawk and Hudson, from Albany to Schenectady, opened in 1830. By 1833 the fever of railroad building had extended into Connecticut, and on the first Wednesday of May, 1833, the Connecticut Legislature constituted as a body politic and

corporate the Hartford and New Haven Railroad, with power to "locate, construct, and fully complete a single, double, or treble railroad or way" from Hartford to the navigable waters of New Haven Harbor. This was the first railroad opened in the State, although the "Boston, Norwich and New London" had been chartered the May previous. It is significant of the slow and halting manner in which its projectors felt their way, so to speak, that it was empowered to use as motors "the power and force of steam, of animals, or of any mechanical or other power or any combination of them." It is difficult to believe that only fifty years have elapsed since this project startled the sleepy villages strung along the turnpikes that then connected the capital cities of Connecticut, and that there are men still living along the route who remember the commotion it raised. Almost everyone, except its promoters, opposed it, on general principles, from the natural conservatism of rural residents, and utter ignorance of the nature and scope of the proposed way. But there were three different classes—shrewd men, who opposed it from interest, with full knowledge, probably, of its possibilities, and these were the directors and stockholders of the turnpikes, the managers of the

steamboat lines, that on the breaking of the Fulton-Livingston monopoly had sprung up, and were enjoying a lucrative carrying trade with a score of points on the Sound, and the farmers through whose land the proposed route would pass.

The nature and extent of this opposition is admirably shown in a memorial addressed to the Legislature of 1832, evidently drawn up by Judge Sherman, and signed by Simeon Baldwin, J. Wood, Roger M. Sherman, Wm. Bristol, and Epaphroditus Champion, "overseers of turnpike stock." There are two remarkable things about this document—that it could be dated so recently as fifty years ago, and the prescience of its authors in so clearly foretelling the evils likely to result to the public from the exclusive privileges granted such corporations. I insert the document for its picturesque and historic interest:

"Your memorialists, to their very great surprise, have lately been informed that a petition is now pending before your honorable body which has been referred to a joint committee of both houses for the incorporation of a railroad from Hartford to New Haven. However beneficial in general such improvement may be, it is very certain that they may be adopted under such circum-

stances as to produce more harm than good, and may result in great injury and injustice to private property. A railroad is a monopoly in a peculiar sense. On a canal or turnpike every citizen has a perfect right to use his own vehicles—not so on a railroad. The carriages upon that must all belong to the proprietors of the road, or run by their especial permission, and must be subject to one superintendence. In the monopoly now contemplated your memorialists are informed and believe that, although no names appear on petition but those of the citizens of this State, yet a great majority of the interest is to be owned and held by strangers, citizens of other States, proprietors in those great and overwhelming establishments of steamboats and railroads which now monopolize the conveyance of passengers between the cities of New York and Philadelphia, and are endeavoring to seize the exclusive right through this State and Long Island Sound, and unite the whole with such additions as they may hereafter acquire under one power. Should they, by the aid of legislative grants and immense and increasing wealth, extend into Massachusetts and reach the capital of New England, a traveler who would enjoy the advantages of a conveyance between Boston and

Washington must submit to such terms as they please to prescribe. No line of steamboats not connected with that company could partake of the right of conveying passengers on these long and frequented routes. A passenger entered at Boston or Hartford for Philadelphia or Washington would pay his fare at the commencement of his journey, and be lost to every intermediate conveyance. Thus all competition would be put down, and the great sums now invested by and extensively divided among our citizens, tending to cheapness and convenience as well as to equality of rights and privileges, would be annihilated, and the expense of traveling would depend on the will and pleasure of that united interest which would find its advantage in the highest possible rates of fare.

“By the grant now contemplated, four turnpike companies between New Haven and Hartford, in which many widows, orphans and persons in moderate circumstances have invested their property, the steam navigation from Hartford to New York, the steamboats between the latter city and New Haven, and many other of the vested interests of our own citizens would be utterly destroyed.”

All of the memorialists had investments in some

of these establishments, and they humbly prayed in behalf of themselves and others in like circumstances, that the charter might not be granted.

We are apt to speak of monopolies as of modern growth, but that called "The Fulton Steamboat Company," which certain "acts" of the New York Legislature had created, far exceeded in powers and privileges any known in our day. A petition found among the papers goes on to recite various acts, forming precedents, under which it had grown up: First, the act of 1787, giving to John Fitch the sole right of employing and navigating for a limited time all vessels on New York waters impelled by steam; second, the act of 1798, withdrawing the exclusive right given to Fitch, bestowing it on Robert Livingston, and extending the time to twenty years; third, the act of 1803, extending the time to twenty years from that date, and including Robert Fulton as one of the privileged; fourth, the act of 1808, providing that whenever Livingston, Fulton, and such persons as they should associate with them, should place on this line additional boats, each one so added should prolong the term of exclusive privilege by five years, such terms *in toto*, however, not to exceed thirty years; fifth, the act

of 1811, making it possible for the persons named in the act or their associates to seize any boat, not having their license, found in waters under the jurisdiction of New York, and to condemn them as though the same had been taken forcibly and wrongfully out of their possession, and forbidding the owners of such boat to obtain any writ of injunction to navigate, employ or remove them out of the jurisdiction of the court during the pendency of the trial of such seizure. The petition then goes on to recite that Livingston and Fulton had complied with the various provisions of the acts in question, and had become possessed of the privileges conferred; that they had since died, but that previous to their death, they had sold to Josiah Ogden Hoffman, Cadwallader D. Colden and William Cutting, the exclusive right, so far as they possessed it, to navigate the waters of the East River in the State of New York, "or the Sound commonly called Long Island Sound," by means of steam or fire, and also a right to the exclusive use of the inventions of Fulton and Livingston; that the former gentlemen, with their associates, had since been incorporated by the Legislature of New York as the Fulton Steamboat Company, to which, by sundry assignments or conveyances, all the ex-

clusive rights and privileges of Fulton and Livingston had been conveyed. The complaint further alleged that the Fulton Steamboat Company had then two steamboats plying on the waters lying between New York and New London, and that there were no other boats whatever "employed in the navigation from any part of the State of New York to any place without the said State and lying on the Sound aforesaid." Having recited these facts, the petitioners next remind the Court that by virtue of the Constitution and laws of the United States, they have the right to navigate any of the waters of New York, and particularly those used in the navigation between New York and other States; which right was denied them by the acts mentioned, and by the threats of enforcement made by the Fulton Steamboat Company; also, that they could not have recourse to the common law, as the moment their vessel entered the waters of New York, it was liable to seizure and practical confiscation; and they therefore prayed for a writ of injunction restraining the Fulton Steamboat Company from bringing any action or suit in any court of the State of New York, under color of the said acts, until the right of the petitioners should be fully ascertained. They also

prayed for an order directing the Fulton Steamboat Company to appear, and show cause why the injunction should not be granted.

John L. Sullivan was the inventor and patentee of a steam engine of a different character from that employed by Fulton in his boats. His petition for an injunction was brought on the advice of Roger Sherman, who, in September, 1819, forwarded him a very elaborate opinion, advising an injunction, which now lies before me. It appears by a letter to Judge Sherman from Henry D. Sedgwick, Esq., of New York, dated October 11, 1819, that the petition was met by the defendants with a demurrer, assigning as causes that the complainants had not made a case entitling them to relief; that the bill contained no equity; that the question was proper only for a court of law; that complainants had an adequate remedy at law, and that before filing the bill the case should have been tried at law; and, sixth, that none of the administrators or next of kin of Fulton and Livingston were made parties to the suit; Sedgwick adds that he does not believe the assigned causes of demurrer sufficient.

The case was one of the *causes célèbres* of the day, and awakened wide interest, but ultimately

ended in a breaking of the monopoly by the courts. On looking over these time-stained documents the query is suggested, what would be thought now of a corporation that claimed and held the exclusive control of the commerce of the Hudson and of Long Island Sound?—for this was practically the privilege of the Fulton Steamboat Company in 1819.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PROBATE JUDGE AND THE TOWN CLERK

IN the quiet Connecticut village whence we write, there are three great men—the minister, the doctor and the judge of probate. All other men may sit in the “store” of evenings, “swap” stories, and discuss their neighbors, but these three by the very dignity of their office are foresworn. The judge is nearing the age limit of seventy, slender, grizzled, with a typical New England face. He wears a tall hat, long frock coat, and trousers of sober hue, a little shiny from long wear.

His house—just across the common from the village tavern, our domicile—with its lofty portico supported by fluted pillars, its carved front door with brass knocker, wide cornice and dormer windows, is most imposing. The judge’s office occupies an L on the left of the main structure, and communicates with his sitting room by a door cut through the dividing partition so that he can step

into his office these days without exposing himself to the nipping air. His office is *sui generis*. Nothing like it is to be found outside of New England. There is an iron safe where wills and inventories for a hundred years back are kept, copied into huge, parchment-bound tomes, a book-case filled with law books, quaint old armchairs with claw feet, an ancient desk with pigeon-holes full of papers, and a huge Franklin stove, which on a January day with the thermometer ten degrees below zero, has a capacity for radiating comfort undreamed of by those who sit beside its degenerate successors. The judge will burn nothing but hickory, and "Pete," his man of all work, cuts without orders every year two of the giants in the hickory grove beyond the calf pasture to fill the stove's capacious maw.

The judge of probate is in a special sense the "little father" of the people of his district. For forty years it has been his duty to declare persons legally dead, and to turn over all they died possessed of, to the legatees—if they left a will—or to the next of kin, if they died intestate. To him widows look for an allowance during the settlement of their husbands' estates; to him minor children appeal that a whole or a part of their

portion of their father's estate may be sold and the proceeds devoted to their support; he is the custodian of all wills, inventories and distributions of estates, counsellor in all questions of law affecting wills and the final disposal of property; a magistrate to hear and decide all claims against estates where the inventory thereof does not exceed \$2,000.

A desire to gather some scattered threads of family history led us to consult the leather-clad volumes in the judge's safe, and many of the long cold days of last winter were passed in his office. One day a family party drove up in carriages, men and women alighted, and filed into the judge's office, legatees under the will or kindred of one of the solid men of the town who had just died, gathered to listen to the reading of the will.

At such times and when he is holding court, the judge appears at his best. He was more carefully brushed than usual this time, his manner was more judicial and consolatory, as befitted so sad and solemn an occasion. The faces of the party were a study. Some knew they had been ignored, some that they had been remembered; others evidently were quite uncertain what the instrument had in store for them. The reading was

soon over, however, and the party filed out, some faces radiant, others depressed or defiant, as if promising a future contest.

Another time there drove up in a mud-besattered carriage that had brought him from the station, four miles away, a small, modest appearing gentleman with a legal air, who proved to be one of the greatest lawyers of the metropolis. He wished to find the parentage of his great-grandmother, Huldah May, who had been born in the old town a hundred years before, but the record of whose birth could not be found, in either the town records (in possession of the town clerk) or in the parish records of the Prime Ancient Society, held by the clerk of the Congregational Church in the village, although a standing offer of \$500 for the entry had been made by him the year before.

At the close of the Revolution, the victorious Whigs having banished the Tories and confiscated their estates, were so incensed against anything of English savor that they refused to keep the vital statistics of their towns because it was the custom in England to do so; consequently from 1781 to 1830 the genealogist finds the most maddening and deplorable hiatus in the volumes that recorded the

births and deaths of the rural towns, and which before that historic struggle were kept with praiseworthy fidelity.

Nothing annoys the judge more than the curiosity of the villagers at every death as to whether or no the deceased left a will—if he did, as to who were the legatees, and the amount of his estate, and a persistent quizzing of him in order to find out. He parries questioners quite skillfully, however, by reminding them that the records in question may be examined by anyone during the legal hours.

The town clerk is another worthy of our village community. His office must have been instituted away back in the twilight of the race when men, growing out of the family and tribal relation, began to found organized communities and needed an official to record their doings. Here the town clerk has also been our neighbor. He is the beau ideal of a scholar—tall, bent, thin-visaged, and stoop-shouldered from long poring over his records. Fidelity to duty is stamped on every lineament. He has no office hours. You are free to examine the records in his office from seven o'clock in the morning until ten at night. He rarely goes out, except to the Congregational Church—of

which he is one of the pillars—on Sundays, and to town meetings. All his remaining hours are spent among his huge tomes, writing, or turning over musty leaves in search of some elusive Amin-adab or Ebenezer, Charity or Patience, or Esther, ancestor or ancestress of some gentle enthusiast across the Continent maybe, who needs but this missing link to complete a family tree.

For fifty successive years at the annual town meetings his fellow citizens have elected him their town clerk, and this without his having expressed the slightest desire for a reelection. His father served fifty years before him. He has a son to whom it may descend, for the townspeople seemingly look on the office as hereditary. The town clerk lacks that reverence and respect accorded his fellow official, the judge of probate, because of the latter's judicial capacity. For keeping its records the town pays its clerk the munificent salary of fifty dollars per year. But this by no means represents the total of his income, for there are many fees and perquisites—so much for recording a deed; so much for administering an oath; so much for a certified copy of any instrument in his office, so much for searching the records; so that on the whole he gets a very tidy salary out

of it. We are of opinion that his largest gains come from those genealogically inclined. There would be more return but that his conscience will permit him to charge but fifty cents an hour for his services.

There are perhaps thirty portly leather-covered volumes which must be examined in making these researches. These are records of births, marriages and deaths, going back to 1670; the earliest are still quite legible. There are some curious things about them, for instance the births of the several children in a family are all recorded at the same time, having evidently been brought in by the father, who copied them from his family Bible, and generally prefaced them by giving the marriage of himself and wife. Some dates are given "to the best of my knowledge and belief." Whether there was a law making this obligatory, is not known. They occur during the term of office of one clerk only, and may have been brought in at his request. Some of the town clerks were of a frugal turn of mind, and used old account books and ledgers for registers. These are quite valuable to the snapper up of unconsidered trifles, as showing the value of articles in common use at that time.

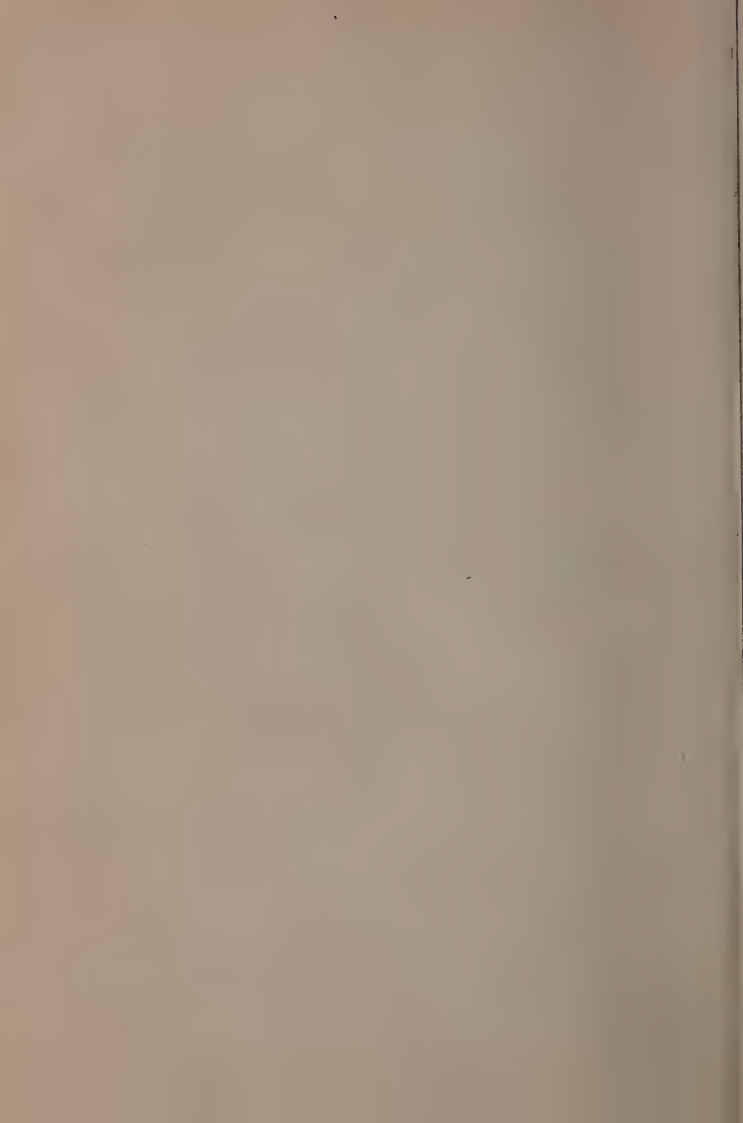
It is very interesting to the town-bred man to sit in the clerk's office and study the callers. Some few are townspeople, but the majority are students of family. We had no idea before of the interest taken in genealogical studies by our fellow Americans. There are men and women, old and young, of all sorts and conditions, but most of them, of course, of culture and some amount of wealth. For 250 years the old town has been pouring her best blood and brawn into the insatiate maw of the cities and of the great West, and the descendants of these "pilgrims" are now coming back to the mother town to learn whence they came. The old official is very patient with them, for he is a genealogical enthusiast himself, and is often able to give them a clue or a fresh scent, when the chase seemed hopeless. He has never been known to accept a fee for this particular service, although many have been tendered. When visitors have exhausted the records of his office, he sends them to his neighbor, the judge of probate, across the street, and to the slender, spectacled young man on his right, who acts as clerk of the Prime Ancient Society, and has one thin volume of baptisms, marriages, and deaths going back to 1670, which contains more names

than all the town clerk's portly volumes combined.

We witnessed in his office, one January afternoon, a somewhat pathetic incident. A farmer with wrinkled face and shoulders bent with toil, came in to have a deed recorded. "At last, 'squire," cried he, his face radiant and eyes beaming, "I have got the old place clear. Here's the last quitclaim deed from brother Hiram, away out in New Zealand. All the other heirs quitclaimed long ago. Rob is in San Francisco, Tom in Rio Janeiro, Harriet in Iowa—how we are scattered! He sends back my check for \$500, too—his share—says he's got more than he can manage now, and to use it in keeping the old place up. Says if he should happen to lose his pile, he'll come back and board it out. Rather handsome of Hi, wasn't it?"

The old clerk agrees that it was, and, taking down a dusty docket, proceeds to record the deed therein.

It is at town meetings, however, that our friend appears to most advantage. It is then made apparent to every voter that he has the town business at his fingers' ends; that he is the one who oils the wheels of the town's machinery, so that they run smoothly. He sits at a small desk on



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